

d e c e m b e r

a magazine of the arts and opinion

Volume 1

1958

KRAUS REPRINT CORPORATION

New York

1967

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DECEMBER



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When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit;
Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

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DECEMBER

DECEMBER has no tie with any organization anywhere. No foundation has invested money in it, no authority has blessed it. We, the editors, are also the owners. Consequently, our standards and goals are wholly ours.

These standards and goals are best revealed in DECEMBER itself. If we survive--we will have had no prototype.

We are humanists. By this we mean that we are far more concerned with people than we are with dogmatic critical or aesthetic attitudes. In fact, we will print strong work whether it comes from an established artist or from a sophomore. It is entirely possible for a novice who has had no artistic training to express his experience effectively in words or visually. We are looking for such people.

There is a growing need for a national magazine edited for the entire university community. DECEMBER's table of contents includes critical articles, topical essays, poetry, fiction, and art work because we think that our readers are equally interested in all these things.

NOTES ON THE STARTING OF MAGAZINES

Vance Bourjaily

I.

I once met a man -- I can't be sure of his name; I'll call him Harry Parker -- who had been a magazine starter. In the early thirties, when printing costs were low, when the no-hour week gave the literary proletariat plenty of leisure, and any cause was due cause, magazine-starting was joyously easy, so Mr. Parker said. He could start a magazine then more easily than most of us can read one now. Once some critic of journalistic procedures complained that none of Mr. Parker's magazines ever had a second issue. Taking note of this, my informant -- he was sitting at the Washington Square Outdoor Art Show with some of his paintings while we talked -- published Volume I, Number 1 of a new magazine the very next morning. The same afternoon, he issued Volume I, Number 2. His paintings weren't much good, but among magazine starters, this man had been a giant of the great days.

I knew a second man, knew him in the army, of whose name I am quite sure: it was Bert. He was very bright, very well-educated; he was discharged just as the second war ended into a New York job market starved for young men. He sorted over the offers thoroughly, and hired himself out as an associate magazine starter to the greatest firm in the field; he set to work on a special floor of the Time-Life building reserved for something described as Project X. I don't know whether Bert knew, fully and precisely, what kind of magazine Project X was to develop. The most persistent of the rumors around New York at the time was that it was to be a literary magazine on a grand scale, something that would be to letters what Architectural Forum was to housing. It never came out. Perhaps the surveys of public interest and advertisers' needs made such a venture seem unwise; Bert, a magazine starter of a careful sort, carefully hired by boss magazine starters after careful considerations on his own part, started no magazine, nor did he help to.

Magazine starting is an act of passion, not one of consideration -- careless, heedless, and irreverent. Work out the probabilities and you will never start one.

II.

Magazine starting, even of the most commercial sort, contains something in it of rebellion, some dissatisfaction with a status quo strong enough to lead to action. If this dissatisfaction amounts to no more than a feeling that there is room for one more comic book, or science fiction journal, it is still rebellion; starting the new unit accuses the field of not making all the money there is to be made from its market.

To begin a noncommercial magazine is rebellion of a wilder kind; existing magazines, say the editors in act, fail to fill some need. It was the style once, in less nervous days, to point whatever failure the new editors perceived in words as well as act. A first issue was the vehicle for a manifest, a bold

prose form, structurally modelled on the United States Declaration of Independence. The manifesto consisted, generally, of indictment, challenge, and promise, its manner changing to match these parts from invective to bombast to epic.

Nothing much is left of these parts now, as most magazines are introduced, but the promise. The manifesto has given way to the prospectus. Even here, the tone taken no longer resembles the speech of heroes; operating out of our midcentury public relations reflex, our promises are delivered with the smile of tact, the wink of cajolery, and the cautious avoidance of anything like the liberator's yawp and swagger.

I am sorry about the disappearance of the manifesto. It was, like most extinct things, like the huge flightless pigeon called the dodo, too easy a target for laughter and for clubs. When I started a magazine myself, I spent weeks writing and rewriting manifestos for it, yet was easily won to compromise by my colleagues before printing time came. So I do not expect, when I scan the pages surrounding these notes in the first issue of "December" to come upon a manifesto here. I do not know what, if anything, the editors plan, and they will receive my copy too late to be influenced to change their plans by anything I have said or will say.

But, manifesto or not, there is rebellion somewhere in these editors; there has to be.

III.

When I started my own magazine, "Discovery," I had everything to learn about the editorial process, and much of that learning was surprising.

For example, I had to learn that selection of manuscripts is not, as I had thought, a critical function but its opposite. Where the critic is reluctant, the editor must be eager. Where the critic is careful, the editor must be rash. The critic, and properly, hesitates, inspects, separates into parts, evaluates these parts; the editor enthusiastically accepts a whole. I seldom bought a story which I didn't know I was going to buy the moment I finished reading it; there was a sensation I seldom know as a reader, which my colleagues and I used to call "the buying pitch". It was a specifically physical sensation; there was tingling in it, excitement, and relief --- relief that here, out of the pages and pages of material submitted was something I'd enjoy publishing. Critics do well to discourage such sensations; editors have nothing else to go by.

My chief regret, in fact, about "Discovery," is that there were stories which brought me to the buying pitch, which I was talked, or talked myself, out of; and a few others which did not bring me to that pitch, which colleagues talked me into. For often, like critics, we would try to verbalize our reactions, to explain to one another why a story was or was not good. Perhaps there was some divertisement in these conversations for us, but they had nothing to do with editorial selection. Editorial selection is made, properly, with the spine, not the voice.

I have often thought that decline of fiction in larger magazines was largely due to the fact that their selections are made by boards of editors, each with a vote, and with words to say or write; its safe that way. The larger the board, the more different minds contributing words, the less risk there is of ever making a mistake, publishing something really bad, outrageous, offensive. For, somewhere beneath the level of critical functioning, is another sort of spinal functioning, a counter-impulse to the buying pitch which may as well be called taste. If you have a big enough board of editors, nothing will ever slip through it which is, in any way, in bad taste. Yet there is hardly a masterpiece in literature which could not be objected to, somewhere, on grounds of taste. So, with the verbalizing editorial board, risk is minimized; but so is personality, and without a specific editorial personality, a magazine is robotized; its nonfiction may be useful, its fiction and poetry are, at best, inoffensive.

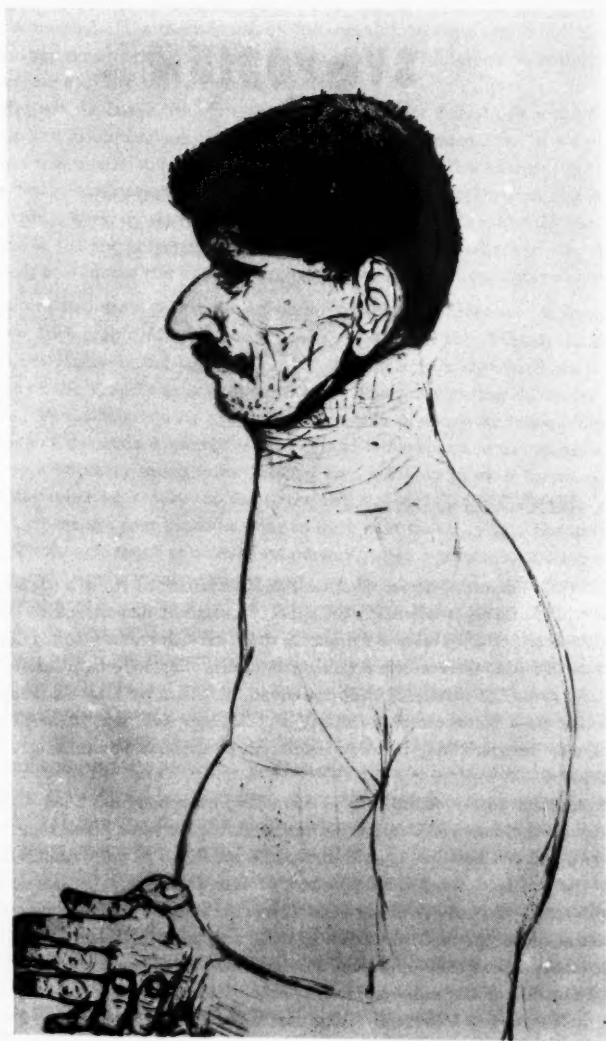
Thus, I do not mind confessing that I learned to trust impulse as an editor, and learned it quickly. There were other lessons which came harder.

IV

A harder lesson, for example, was that the work of editing a magazine, is not by any means confined to reading and selecting material; it could even be argued that reading and selection are the less important half of the job. The other half -- developing and soliciting material -- takes far more thought and far more effort. The techniques involved -- correspondence with authors, pursuit of agents, acquisition of information about new or developing writers, suggestion of topic, begging revision (if possible without promise of payment) -- are exhausting, endless, sometimes demeaning and always competitive. It is this aspect of editing which, finally, turns from the field people like myself who do not have a strong sense of vocation, of being called. It is also this aspect on which the success or failure of a new magazine depends. And so to the other qualities I have discussed which are involved in the starting of magazines -- passion and irreverence, rebellion, enthusiasm and impulse, must be added vocation, which, to define it further, means a compulsion to squander energy, without thought, for an idea.

V

For each issue of a magazine, finally, is an idea, an eclectic one since most of its parts are contributed by others. It is an idea which one has, and can never quite state, except by presenting it; and an idea which is never quite achieved, though one feels, with each new issue, that one may have it this time. And one becomes, as always happens with human ideas, less the proprietor than the servant; this happens, with a magazine, even before the first issue appears. It must, I imagine have happened already to the editors of this one. The fortunate men are those who are happy in serving their ideas; for myself, I was not. The best wish I can offer the editors of "December" is that such fortune may be theirs. ●



SELF-PORTRAIT

Mauricio Lasansky

1957

SYMPOSIUM

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A TRULY ACADEMIC
ATMOSPHERE TO EXIST IN A UNIVERSITY
WHERE EVERY STATE RESIDENT MUST
BE ADMITTED?



DR. RHODES DUNLAP

Utopia, according to Sir Thomas More's account of it, is a society which enjoys an admirable academic atmosphere, though it cannot boast a State University. At least, More makes no mention of a State University in his description of the many Utopian devices for popular education. But we may reasonably assume that, if a State University of Utopia existed, it would be a true academic community--that is, a community of intelligent learning--and that it would be open to all. For to deny anybody full educational opportunities would clearly be un-Utopian.

In the United States the idea of educating everybody has been with us so long that it has lost whatever Utopian glamor it may once have possessed. But our faith in popular education is an inescapable corollary of our democratic convictions, and this faith has not been destroyed even by our shocked realization (long before Sputnik) that many of our schools had fallen into a barbarous disregard for substantial learning. We take it for granted that everybody will obtain at least a high school education--whatever that may consist of--and we find it not unnatural that increasing numbers of high school graduates now continue into college. In the face of this trend, some institutions of higher learning are resolute in restricting their enrolment to the most talented and best-trained applicants. But there are many colleges and universities to which no holder of a high school diploma is refused admission. These latter institutions, up to now, have been protected from the full consequences of their generous policy by a certain natural screening of entering freshmen, since usually the high school student who has had a hard time of it academically has not thought it advisable to try his

luck at higher learning. But as the demand for higher education grows, this academic screening, like the economic and social screening which has also limited college enrolments, will tend to disappear. The logical culmination is the emergence of the University for Everybody.

Whether we welcome the idea of the University for Everybody is not the point. I do not think that we could prevent its establishment even if we wished, and the true friend of higher education will exert his energies not in jeremiads but in exploring means by which popular higher education can be made to work. We may thus be able to forestall the sort of academic vertigo from which the secondary schools, the universities' immediate predecessors in trying to educate the entire community, have only begun to recover.

There are two main academic problems which the University for Everybody must face. Both problems are already familiar--though not, I think, in their most extreme form--in the Universities for Almost Everybody which are a standard feature of the American academic scene. The most vexing difficulty is that offered by the inadequate pre-college training of many students. The other is that of the wide disparity of ability and background in the student body as a whole, a disparity much more striking than is likely to exist in colleges which limit their enrolment. So far as the inadequately trained students are concerned, there are four possible ways to deal with them. First, the university may simply fail them as quickly as possible; such a solution, though effective in its way, would involve tragic waste for all concerned. Alternatively, the university may lower its standards of course work and grading; this would, however, be an inexcusable disservice both to sound learning and to the students themselves. As a third alternative the university may institute remedial courses to educate its deficient students up to the college-entrance level; but this involves a heavy drain on the university's resources, which in any case will be heavily burdened. There is another solution which I believe is simpler and better. Students who are shown by preliminary tests to be inadequately prepared for freshman work should be instructed to remain in high school--whether or not they have received a diploma already--until the deficiencies have been corrected; most high schools, even those with the least ambitious syllabi, will be capable of providing the required training on request, and it is even possible that such a policy would encourage high schools to accelerate the strengthening of their academic programs. Such a required postponement of college entrance would not involve any real inconsistency with an educational open-door policy; if an institution is to be a University for Everybody it must first be a university. The second problem, that of the disparity among students, is also soluble without compromising the democratic nature of the institution. For it must not be forgotten that our version of democracy, which considers every individual to be of equal dignity, also acknowledges and respects individual differences, and prides itself on the success with which it avoids any arbitrary limitation of opportunity. If the University for Everybody is to avoid treating its best students like stepchildren, it must take care not only that it brings everyone up to good .

university standards but that it provides an adequate range of high-level courses and programs which will enable the very best minds among its students to grow and flourish.

Will the University for Everybody possess a "truly academic atmosphere"? With the safeguards mentioned, the answer may well be yes. But an academic atmosphere is not something that can be blueprinted with the architecture. It originates as an effect rather than a precondition of learning. It exists wherever serious study and learning are taking place, inside college or out. It is self-perpetuating to the extent that learning is contagious. It cannot be guaranteed by abolishing the football team. Its deadliest enemies are the educational assembly-line and imposed mediocrity.

DR. LESTER D. LONGMAN

I have been asked to say whether a "truly academic atmosphere can exist in a university where every state resident must be admitted." The answer is no. Where the students are a cross section of the population, an institution would not have an academic atmosphere and could not be a university. If those who came had an average I. Q. of eighty and were primarily interested in sports, would it be a university? However one defines a university, there must be a distinction between those who are competent to take part and those who are not, whether as students or staff.

Suppose we say that all those who take part as students must have at least a high school education. This would certainly help; whether it would help enough depends on one's definition of the "truly academic." It will suffice if one equates 'truly' with 'typically' and if state universities are typical today. People who are "other-directed" and well-adjusted often define terms by reference to current practice.

Since, by any definition, the participants in a university must have certain qualifications, it would not be illogical to say that a university is "truly academic" only if the students accepted have had a B average in high school or pass a serious entrance examination. Nor would this imply an undemocratic viewpoint. It is merely a question of efficiency in accomplishing what one believes a university should do. Is it democratic to give every one who wants

to teach a chance, and aristocratic to appoint to the staff only those who have a Ph.D. or the equivalent? And most people are satisfied that the graduate school should have standards of admission which make it somewhat exclusive. Thus, everyone must agree that the university must be selective and the problem is one of degree.

I am reminded here of a statement made by William H. Whyte, Jr. in "The Organization Man." As the book ends he says, "The few will never flourish where the values of the many are against them." This is an exaggeration, since it does happen--but not so easily. In a society of philistines, groups of artists band together to make a little island in an alien sea. In a community of scientists it takes a good man to be king. Intellectuals thrive on understanding and appreciation, but are the values of the many with them--even in a state university?

It is a natural desire of scholars, artists, scientists, and all others dedicated to creative work to form a community reasonably insulated from the disturbances and platitudes of the market place. They need it for efficiency in achieving their aims, but even more for the stimulus and inspiration which make life rewarding. I once had the good fortune to live in the Graduate College at Princeton, a separate and isolated Gothic building where a privileged group of serious scholars lived and ate together; it was a more valuable experience than most of my classes and had more indestructible results.

Only an equalitarian philosophy, which even the Russians know is out of place in the life of the intellect, prevents a state university from providing a separate curriculum for superior students. I would go further and provide separate housing. If this were done, the students who are primarily interested in collegiate life could be taken care of without too much concern for the "truly academic atmosphere." And if a door were left ajar, the average student would not be denied his opportunity to reform and join the privileged group, for some have innate ability, but wake up late.

A trend to programs for superior students has already begun, even in state universities, but some who otherwise approve object to the expense. They need not be expensive. A method of pass and honors courses used in Canada provides a precedent. Let the majority take the pass course, in which they will be taught in large classes, and let each department offer them a specific set of courses totaling about thirty credit hours--enough for a major with some training for a job. In this way the money could be saved to teach superior students, say those with a B average, in small classes, and most courses would be open only to them. At no extra expense we could do the job of mass education which is generally expected of us, give our best efforts to the better students in separate courses, and avoid creating an elite class which is conspicuously small. It would be like a good small college within the large College of Liberal Arts, and perhaps with its own residence halls. We might call it Sputnik College, in honor of the alarm bell which should wake up more than science education.

DR. JOHN C. MCGALLIARD

Presumably "every state resident" is to be taken as meaning every resident of the state who has graduated from an accredited secondary school. Hence the question is concerned with the level of mental capacity in the students which is requisite if an academic atmosphere is to obtain in the institution. Academic, presumably, does not mean impractical, or unrelated to life--although it often carries that implication in current use. Instead, it suggests here a temporary detachment; an inquiring mind; an attitude free from pre-judgment or partisan interest. It implies a willingness to exert oneself in order to understand many things, all of them of human value and importance but none of them necessarily pursued as a means to technical qualification for a specific occupation.

Can such an attitude exist under the conditions stated in the question? Theoretically, yes. Indeed, amusingly enough, it is probable that both the attitude and an environment likely to nourish it can be found in a well conducted institution for the feeble-minded. The inmates of such places, I am told, often have a detached attitude toward utilitarian matters along with a keen zest for life. Mental level in itself neither excludes nor guarantees the pursuit of learning and truth for their own sake. There is no reason why a student body of any level might not live and delight in an academic atmosphere. Whether a particular student body does so or not depends on the collective social pressure predominant in that specific community.

In American society in the mid-twentieth century, the social pressures to which the scholastically weaker half of entering freshmen most readily respond are apt to be predominantly utilitarian. Consequently the goals of these students are often prematurely practical. "What's in it for me?" is a legitimate question about any course or subject of study--provided both "it" and "me" are defined with adequate breadth. The weaker freshman is often unprepared to apply an adequate definition. Hence, in part, his aversion to required courses--whether he condemns primarily the requirement or the subject itself.

It seems probable that many state universities and colleges will continue to accept any high school graduate who applies--before a deadline. But it is the obligation of these institutions to provide a setting and an atmosphere in which all students will recognize an encouragement to develop the academic attitude as described above. The college or university has an especially imperative duty to foster the spirit of free inquiry, carried out widely and deeply, in its most capable students. This can be accomplished through more careful advisory work; through the formation of special classes in all courses of large enrolment; and through the quiet, seemingly casual promotion of closer, more congenial association among superior students. These informal arrangements will produce far better results than an attempt to set up "a college within a college."

DR. CURT ZIMANSKY

Long ago, another section of a required course was needed and I was assigned to teach it. The other instructors were each to send me a quota of students. This they did by system: each sent me his back row of students. Their disencumbered sections moved rapidly while mine, burdened with several rows of anchors, challenged me to furnish motive power. Why the back row of a room should so powerfully attract the more feckless is another problem. . . I sometimes dream of constructing a classroom without a back row. At all events, my class with its three back rows was generally impossible and intellectually improbable. Still, we managed. I outlined everything; I carefully explained that BC dates work backwards, that Richard III reigned after Richard II, and that I came before e except after c. In fact, had it not been for the necessity of covering subject matter too far removed from the other interests of the students, the class would have been pretty successful. There were casualties. Some could not, some would not; the two best, swept in by accident, endured class, got their A's, and went elsewhere for academic atmosphere. The most obvious loser was the boy in the left front corner, mildly apt and eager, who might have developed a few ideas had competition pushed him, but who was satisfied by being the first to raise his hand whenever I asked, "And what did Hamlet do next?"

The other sections fared better, obviously, because some of their misfits had been drawn off. And I myself have taught select groups (more legitimately selected) with all the pleasure of achievement that is one of the rewards of teaching. Like any other artisan, the teacher is happiest when working with suitable materials. It may well require more technique to deal with flawed materials, and the results may be surprising and gratifying; working against nature frequently is.

One can refine any group by drawing off those least suited to belong to it. In some colleges with sharply limited enrollment the task is easy and the mission of the college determines which students it will select. But the large state university has no such single mission and must deal with a large and heterogeneous group. The problem is to provide an environment--in and out of class--in which the interests of all its students can be fostered. An academic atmosphere, I take it, is not rarified air emanating from the foremost rows of the classroom and drifting about half way back. It must pervade the classroom evenly. There must be common interests, some body of knowledge held in common, and a generally similar range of ability within a group before such an atmosphere can be established. Such a group must be homogeneous; nowadays no such group is likely to be large.

There are a few awkward corollaries. Large lecture courses--inevitable in a university that processes students in bulk--are clearly out of place. Any scheme of sectioning students according to their needs and abilities will re-

quire more teachers, at a time when the demand for any kind of teacher is just beginning to exceed the supply. Sectioning itself is felt to be vaguely undemocratic, or at best an example of bureaucratic bad manners; it does lead to occasional injustice, but without it about half the students in a university like ours--the worst as well as the best--suffer the injustice of being in classes they are not fitted for. For all save our best students, there is a sort of Gresham's Law by which the cheap and easy courses tend to drive out those of sound value. To guard against this we must drop our polite fiction that all subjects in the curriculum--physics and physical education--are equal in the intellectual hierarchy, and take the responsibility of directing students into suitable areas.

I have been addressing myself to classroom problems, even though I assume that the question of academic atmosphere applies more to the environment outside. But can one do more than provide the true student with an opportunity to use his mind and protect him from the entrenched mediocrity of the large class? Outside he will have to hold his own against the values of his fellow collegians who are essentially non-students. He cannot be cloistered or fugitive, nor can an academic atmosphere be breathed without dust and heat.

MR. TOM SLATTERY

My first inclination is to answer no, but I hasten to add that with our secondary school system, a wide open admission policy may be the only realistic approach.

There is no legal mandate to the effect that every state resident must be admitted to any of the Iowa State supported universities, and at first blush, this would seem to vitiate the question, or at least render it academic. But the "war babies" are coming and in lieu of expanded facilities the answer to more students will probably be stricter academic standards. Whether this should take the form of sterner admission requirements or higher grade standards after admission becomes the essence of question.

My "no" to the question stems from a belief that unlimited admission makes it extremely difficult if not impossible for the university to attain high academic standards, not so much because of the number of students as from the retarding effect of a lower average ability to learn. Unless he wishes to lose a large portion of his class, the instructor must set his pace with the majority.

My qualification of the "no" stems from practical considerations. I feel that the primary and secondary school systems do not adequately prepare students for college nor do their ratings accurately reflect the ability of their academic product.

If admission were denied on the basis of an entrance exam rather than on high school standing, there would still be the question of the validity and reliability of the test and also the problem of the student who "finds himself" in college. I argue mainly for the latter. If a student doesn't pan out, he may be dropped.

So within the framework of a given situation, admission to all seems to provide the best make-shift answer. I would advocate stricter admission requirements when the primary and secondary school standings provide a more reliable gauge of the student's ability to do college work. (I will not consider another alternative--that of raising tuition, as this would tend to create an educational aristocracy of the moneyed classes.)

That the inadequacy of U. S. education at almost all levels is no mere than hyperbolic conundrum can be seen by even a cursory comparison of the European--and Russian--systems with our own.

There the philosophy is pragmatic: schools are for learning. Foreign languages, mathematics, and science are taught in the grammar school--and the equivalent of the American high school graduate is likely to have had differential and integral calculus, analytic geometry, applications of mathematics to physics, and spherical trigonometry. Mathematics represents only one of our deficiencies.

From here one might turn to the prevalent American attitude towards our young that prompted Philip Wylie to call America the world's first Pedoarchy, characterized by, "Let 'em play, they're only young once."

While adjustment is doubtlessly important, it must not be bought at the cost of scholastic and intellectual development. The two goals are not incompatible--in fact intellectual development is itself important to social adjustment.

With an elementary and secondary school system which is so inadequately feeding our universities, the question of admission takes on a special background twist. To eliminate students who have not really been given the opportunity or incentive to demonstrate their ability does them an injustice as well as wastes human resources. Yet, not to eliminate them, makes high scholastic standards difficult to attain.

I feel that a true academic atmosphere can be attained only when students arrive in college ready and able to do college work--an admission restriction, if you please, based upon intelligence and performance in the lower grades when these background data have become reliable enough to take most of the doubt out of admission decisions is the ultimate solution.

But at this time, with the problems of the present day, I would stand up for unlimited enrolment--despite its detrimental effect upon both students and teachers. I argue now from a personal bias. I should never have been admitted to college myself if limitations based upon high school attainment were in effect--I graduated second from the bottom of my class.

OF A DEAD LOVE CHILD

Nothing of lily, rose, or myrrh
Has gone to soent the air for her.
Water goes smooth as ever by
The blanket where she woke to die.

Crowfoot and trillium, come and ferry
Away the burden none would carry,
And garland her with leaf and wand
And rootlet curling round the hand.

For though last night awake she came
With customary kick and scream,
Her only garment is the skin
Lover and lover perish in.

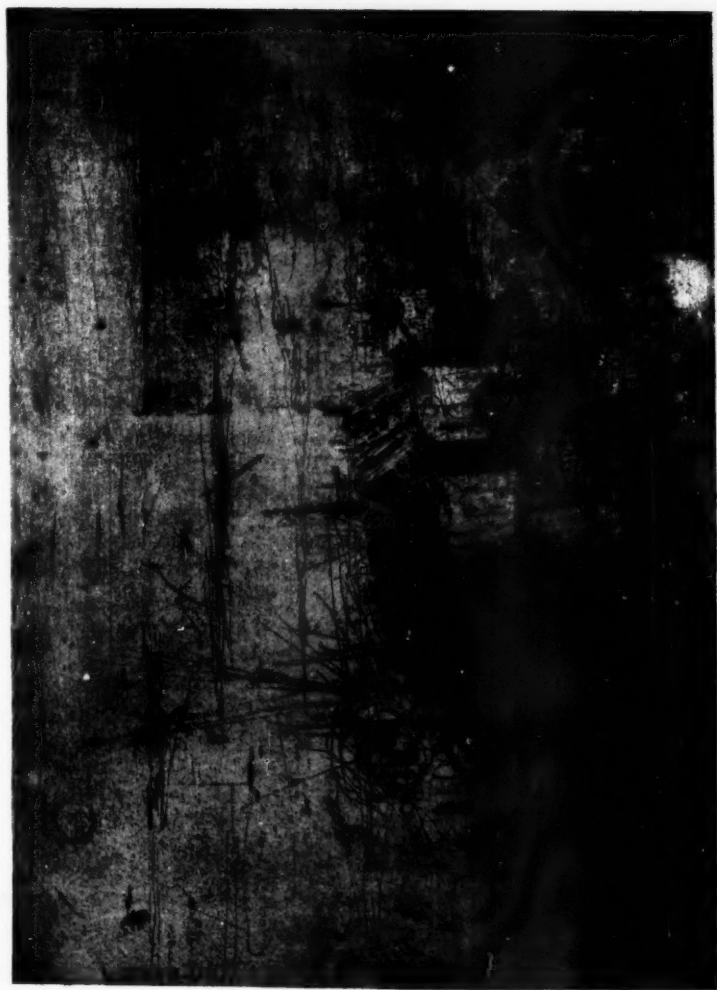
Mothwing and mouse-breath, waft her on,
Soft fold the grass where she lies down.

James Wright

MEDEA

Alone among descendants of the sun
You turned to darkness, as if nothing
Made bright could satisfy your wild, witching
Fingers. They kept their secrets well, undone
By a body never needed. A woman,
And yet only when a man came looking
For a kingdom did you weaken. Knowing
The way of dreams, you kissed his dragon
Lazy; to his golden weapon clinging
He took praise. I understand your bitterness.
He thought it was a toy; the game begun,
He tried to play without you. Grieving
When you killed his only sons, could you guess
That time was heavy with the seed of Jason?

Barbara FitzGerald



CITYSCAPE

Arthur Levine

1950

A CURSE ON INLAND CITIES

James Wright

Now paths, be withered
Everywhere I look,
Inhabitants of shells, creep out
And die, far into autumn.
Women whose jaws are leather,
Women who drown in dust,
Beckon to sewers.
Witches in urinals,
Hum, till the sea returns,
Your arid songs,
Rills in gutters,
Choke, dammed by a leaf-bone.
Tenements, throttle your spiders' cries,
Inland sparrows, starve.
Doves, go blind
Staring, plucking at lawns.
Rachitic jays, flop in the gutters.
Dull song, petty feather,
Short mean flight
From wire to curbstone, perish,
Perish for me.

I dream of gulls and wet sea-swans descending
Beside that sea, so many days from here.
The gull swoops close enough to join the sound
Of beer cans knocking barnacles from stones,
Of huge logs carving foam, no one knows how,
Out of the swells. But here the sea is lost,
And gulls are glacial feathers underground.

Beneath these towns, I feel the muscular tug
Of lost sea-birds and Nereids' aimless bones.
These inland deserts heap the world's old age
Under the sewers. Longing for scales and brine,
I stand, one mourner, on the sea's deserted grave.
Citizens drowse through subtle darkness here.

But when the dark begins, I cannot drowse.
I dream of piles dividing weeds and foam,
The skin-quickening racket and slam of waves.
Bleak in dry dawn, when trucks and taxis die,
I turn to see the salt beard's freshening locks,
Bellowing Nereids rising out of the swells.
I dream of the long terrible combers deepening
The root-thewed shoulders of magnificent shores,
And the sea suddenly clambering up like man,
Old, nameless, quick, and laughing where he died.

BOGEY

Another unit scramble, nothing more,
 And yet you feel
 Behind your mask, behind your face,
 Guts strapped and bladdered into place
 Astride ten tons of special steels,
 The same habitual terror as before.

'What if this present were the world's last night--
 You read that once,
 And ever since the words have run
 Between the trigger and the gun:
 Repeat your lesson like a dunce--
 What if this scramble proves the blooded flight?

A bogey or a transport off its track?
 You never know
 Until you look them over. Here
 It comes--now you can shelve your fear--
 A Cub, the pilot's face like dough,
 More scared than you. Wave and head on back

To sit and shuffle, deal another hand
 And wait an hour
 Till you can hit the sack for good,
 When young, you always understood
 All problems could be solved. Devour
 The time you have, but do not have in hand.

John Taylor

HOW WITH FINE AGILE BODIES WE LEAPT

How with fine agile bodies we leapt
 feeling our crushing weight Johnny-
on-the-Pony blood racing for the fall,
 Running was eagle to us chasing a ball
 while Tony waited for the usual volley.
 Few could guess whose fingers pepped
 the old man's back, --run... Ring-a-leavio!
 Each victory was the first, such a long time ago.

Sydney Wolff

GREEK GODS

The old gods are now unkempt
As pastured goats,
They bleat sick song when passing pedants
Twist their tales,
Sit sulking, dream of unbroken temples,
And fight listlessly among themselves.

But I have read of their one-time rage
And the lightning in their eyes:
They ate at great table,
Chased frightened falcons from the skies,
Made awed poets sing,
And laughed loud
With the women of a king .

Then
Neglect locked
Like an iron door
On doctored philosophy's hysteric gods,
And left men quiet
With remembering.

E. G. Skillings

GOODBYE NOW AND BAD LUCK

On the corner there: grinning with white
teeth (does Hell sell toothpaste?)
--that gentleman in the Panama
hat. Who? It is the noon-day devil.

Banked Cadillacs carry us aloft
into sweetest, paid-for Heaven; chaste
angels we become. The traffic light
urges my gentleman

across. Oh, his jolly hand beckons!
To us? Me. I thought night
was when they came for it, not lucid
lunch-time. Clicking secretaries taste

double dime-store marshmallow sundaes.
Who stands eyeing the divinity
fudge; can it be the bright
son of the morning? Yes, it is he.

Frederick Eckman

TEN HOURS IN MUMFORD

Ron Levin

Paul lay there motionless. He realized now it was not a dream and that the slightest movement would frighten it away. The floor was cement, and he was lying on his left side next to the bars, his arm asleep from having served as a pillow. He wanted very much to move it, but he remained still. As he looked at the face, a shiver drew his neck taut for an instant, then let it go. He knew it was not really that large at all, but from ten inches away, it seemed magnified into some huge beast that had come to prey upon him as he slept.

He lay there watching the round, black eyes, returning their hard stare between two bars. I mustn't blink, he thought and forced his eyes open wider. The pointed nose kept twitching and wrinkling, and he could make out the whiskers now. Then his eyes began to ache, and he knew he couldn't hold out much longer. With one last effort, he looked directly into its eyes and saw nothing at all. Okay, he thought; you win, friend. He blinked twice. The rat vanished.

Standing up quickly and massaging his arm, he tried to find some trace of it, but there wasn't any. There wasn't even a hole that he could see in his end of the cell block. Maybe it'll come back later, he thought, and glanced down at his wrist, remembering as he did that they had taken his watch to keep for him along with his money. Their taking his money he hadn't minded so much; but the watch was something else. At least, he thought, if he weren't sure of anything else, he always could have known what time it was; and it would have been a big help.

He glanced through the block once more, but nothing had changed. Outside his cell, a corridor was split in half by another row of bars, and a harsh glare from the overhead lights fell on everything in the block. They were all grey--the floor, the wall, the ceiling and the bars. He was in the first cell. Twenty feet away, at the upper end, was a GI can and a closed window. And that was all of it, except for the heavy, steel door across from him through which they had brought him earlier. He figured he must have slept about two hours and that it must be some time after midnight. As he stood there, his hands gripping the bars, he gradually became aware of two sounds that seemed to be growing louder. Each was clearly distinct from the other, the louder one seeming to come from farther away. It was the sound of a man snoring--not the uneven snoring of a drunk with gaps and pauses, but the relaxed snoring of a man in a deep, contented sleep. From the sound of it, Paul decided that the snorer must be fairly old.

The other sound was much fainter, yet it seemed to come from the next cell on his left. It reminded him of the whimper a dog makes in his throat

when he wants to come in out of the cold. But it contained just the trace of a moan to identify it as being human. The whimperer sounded as though he were in pain, but too weak to care anymore. He sounded much younger than the snorer. Paul remained standing there, listening intently, until he realized the muscles in his arms were flexed, his hands gripping the bars tightly as though he were trying to pull them apart. He dropped his arms and turned around to examine the cell.

It was too small. That was the first thing he didn't like. It was not more than eight by six, three of the six feet taken up by the bunks that hung out from the wall; and it was too dark. That was the second thing he didn't like. There was a thin cotton mattress on each bunk, and he examined them, trying to decide which was dirtier. He picked up the corner of one to see if its underside were any cleaner and held it still for a second. The roach was planted firmly in the sardine can, its antennae waving wildly as the two of them regarded one another. He shook his head from side to side and let the mattress fall back into place.

The toilet was recessed into the rear wall. There was a black hole, a seat and a white button at eye level. He pressed the button, and the water gushed out from somewhere inside the hole and fell away beneath him, until not even a trickle remained. He liked the sound it made and pressed it two more times, but he still couldn't see the water. Across from the bunks was another recess for the sink and another button. He pressed this one, relieved to find that it went in easier than the toilet button; but nothing happened. He pressed it again, but still nothing happened. Then suddenly feeling more disappointed than angry, he sat down on the floor, his back against the wall. He had been sitting there for a few minutes, when he felt it run along his neck and shoulders. In one precise movement, he grasped it between his thumb and forefinger, flinging it to the floor. The roach began to crawl away, until he stood up and gave it a light pat with his shoe. Then turning around and looking closely at the wall, he understood why he hadn't seen them before. The dirt on the wall formed a perfect camouflage for them, as they clung to it now--their antennae waving slowly back and forth in the close air of the cell. There were sixteen of them, and he counted them again to make sure. When he lifted the mattress this time, the roach was gone, and holding the sardine can by the edges, he started killing the bottom ones first so as not to disturb the others. When he had finished, he inspected the wall once more and, satisfied with the results, kicked the bodies out into the corridor. Then he sat down, laying the can beside him, and stared down at his shoes.

The whimperer and the snorer were still at it, and he listened to them closely for a few minutes, finally deciding he liked the snoring much better than the whimpering. Anyway, he thought, it gave him something to think about--something besides the events of the past evening.

"Mumford."

He said it aloud almost without thinking. He was in the City Jail of



SIPHATECIA'S ADMIRER

Lynn Schroeder

1956

Mumford, Texas; and he wished now he'd spent the night at the "Y" in Garner, Oklahoma, as he'd originally planned. But the traffic had been good after supper, and he'd tried for one last ride and gotten it. Two hours later, he'd climbed out of the pickup truck and, thanking the farmer, started to walk into Mumford. In ten minutes or so, he was standing in front of a hardware store with his bearded face staring back at him in the brightly lit window. He was wearing a faded grey windbreaker, a t-shirt, a pair of torn but fairly clean khakis and the bottoms of his old combat boots; and he had a small canvas bag in his left hand. As he stood there looking, he noticed something else in the window. The black Ford had stopped right in the middle of the garden tool display. He turned around and that was when it had all started. The younger one had done all the talking and kept smiling as he asked the questions, Paul giving him all the right answers; but none of them helped any. There was just the trace of a bruise under the cop's right eye, and he noticed it spoiled the smile perfectly. There was a town ordinance against hitchhikers or vagrants being on the streets after dark--anyone like that, the cop had added, his smile widening as he glanced up and down at Paul. They were going to let him spend the night down at the jail, then after a free breakfast in the morning, take him out on sixty-six where he could catch a ride. He wouldn't be booked or anything, the cop said, but he'd have to spend the night in jail. After realizing he had no choice, Paul had gotten in the car. A short while later, the heavy, steel door had slammed shut behind him.

Now he let his muscles relax into a slump and leaned back farther against the wall while listening to the snorer and the whimperer. He shut his eyes and heard them together as one strange sound. Then he listened to each separately for a few minutes and satisfied that neither had changed, heard them grow fainter and fainter as he fell asleep.

* * *

It was the terrible thirst that woke him, and he sat there running the tip of his tongue over the insides of his mouth and over his lips, feeling it stick to the dry places. He looked out into the corridor and froze. The rat was coming along near the bars and approaching the roaches. It seemed to neither crawl, walk nor run, but slide over the floor in spurts as though it were a toy at the end of a string, with a child giving the string a series of sharp tugs. He wondered if it were going to eat the roaches, and he decided it wouldn't. The rat came on, one tug at a time, until it was in the midst of the circle of bodies, sniffing each one very slowly. Then it looked up for a second, its head darting to the left and right, the eyes gleaming. Suddenly, the rat dropped its head and with a quick movement, thrust the tip of its nose and mouth into the nearest body, raising up after a few seconds, the jaw muscles chewing furiously, the eyes staring into the cell.

Paul forgot his thirst and the whimperer and the snorer. There were only the rat and the roaches. It spent a minute or so on each one, and he imagined it was leaving the hard, outer skeleton and eating only the soft, inner parts.

ST.

CLO

As it started on the fifth one, it lifted up its head again and became still. Paul followed its glance, but from where he sat, he couldn't see what the rat was looking at. Then the first arms from the puddle of water came into view, followed by the larger body of the puddle, until it was almost touching the rat. With an abrupt movement, the animal bent down to sniff it and apparently displeased with its findings, retreated to the bodies farthest away from the puddle and resumed its meal. But after a few minutes, the puddle had spread out into a shallow lake that covered all of the bodies. The rat retreated once more, gave a last hurried glance and left, a series of sharp tugs taking it back to its hole, which Paul now saw was half concealed behind a large drain pipe in the corner.

He got up now slowly and stood next to the bars, his arms over his head, hands gripping the steel loosely, and then catching the first, faint scent from the puddle, understood why the rat had left. It was a sharp, cheese-like smell --the unmistakable odor of urine--and it began to get stronger as it diffused upward toward the ceiling. It came from the whimperer; he knew that now, and he cursed him silently for a few seconds while staring down at the puddle. It finally found its proper level and became still, the surface broken only by the partly submerged bodies of the roaches. The smell was much worse now, than it had been. He cursed the whimperer again, this time more viciously but still to himself, and turned away from the bars and the odor, feeling that something was not quite....

The thirst hit him all at once and twice as strongly as before, now that the rat had gone. He couldn't remember when he'd wanted a drink of water as much as he did now, and the anger began rising within him, making it worse.

"Hey!" he shouted. His voice sounded strange to him after the long silence.

"Hey, somebody! I ain' got any water in here. My sink does'n work!" After the rising and falling of his voice, the silence seemed more intense than before.

"Hey! My sink's busted! How 'bout bringin' me a glass o' water?" He was shouting at the top of his voice now, and it made him feel better. It had been too quiet in here anyway, he thought. He didn't think anyone on the other side of the door could hear him, but it made him feel good just the

ST. CLAIR JOHNSON

Iowa City, Iowa

CLOTHING FOR MEN



same. He managed to find a little saliva to swallow to soothe his throat and got ready to holler again. The quiet in the block was bothering him for some reason, and the reason came to him all at once.

The snorer had stopped.

Paul held his breath and listened; but he could hear nothing.

"Hey! Will somebody please bring me some water?"

"Who's doing all that damn shoutin' down there?"

It was the snorer. Paul could have screamed, he was so excited. He pressed eagerly against the bars, his body trembling.

"It's me."

"Who in the hell's me?" The voice was thick and hoarse from sleep, and it did belong to an old man.

"I'm the new guy down here in number one. Hey, are you up?"

"Well, goddamn if that don't beat all! Course I'm up! How the hell 'ja spect me to sleep with all that damn yellin' gone on? Nuf to wake up anybody!" The words came out quickly with the sound of a man who had lost his patience with the world.

"Hey, mister," said Paul. "I don't know who you are, but I ain't got any water down here. My sink's busted, and I'm thirsty as hell."

There was no sound from the snorer.

"Look, mister. I'm sorry if I woke you up. I apologize, but I was only tryin' to get somebody out there to bring me a drink of water."

"Ahhh, don't worry bout it none. You didn't wake me. I was up anyway. Get to bed at eight and get up at four. Can't sleep past four anyhow. Wait a minute 'n I'll bring ya some water. Ain't no use in tryin' to git Sumley in here neither. He's out there sleepin' like a dead hawk. Bastud wouldn't bring you none nohow, if he did hear ya."

Paul wondered if he were kidding him. How could he bring him some water, he thought, if he were locked in too? Then he figured he was kidding him or just telling him that so he could fall asleep again. He pushed against the bars and listened intensely. The snorer was getting up now; he could hear him. He could hear the sound of his shoes scuffing on the floor, and then he heard him cough and hawk his throat, then spit. The toilet flushed and the sink ran for a few seconds. Paul could feel his hands tugging at the bars again, and he waited, watching.

In a few seconds, a tall, heavily built man came striding down the corridor with a tin cup in his hand. He paused for a second as he reached the puddle, then casting a sour glance into the whimperer's cell, stepped over the puddle and handed the cup to Paul.

"Sonvabitch!" He used only three syllables to pronounce the word, his eyes a clear blue, glinting angrily in the bright light. "Lookit that sonvabitch lyin' there on the floor like a damn dog. Get up! Get up, you bastud and sleep on the bed like a man, for I kick the shit outa ya! Get up, you sonvabitch!"

He kept on shouting at the whimperer, and Paul listened, downing the

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water in one gulp. It was warm and had a metal taste to it, but it was good. He immediately wanted some more. The snorer kept raving at the whimperer, and Paul wondered how he were going to carry out his threats. The whimperer was obviously locked in his cell, as the snorer made no attempt to enter it.

He was wearing a clean undershirt with a small hole in the stomach and a pair of light blue slacks with tan shoes. His face was white, the skin under his neck starting to hang down in a few, small loose folds. He had a large nose that rounded off at the end like that of a circus clown's, and his ears were also large and went well with the nose. He was thick in the chest, his arms large, the muscles in them those of a man who has done hard, physical labor most of his life. The hair on his head was thinning out and partly grey. It had just been combed and was still wet with water.

"Lookit him. Lyin' right there in the middle of it like a damn dog! Worse'n a dog. Hell, I don't know what he is. Yes, I do, too. He's a dope fiend! A goddamn junkie! Couldn't get up and go to the toilet like a man. Had to piss all over the floor. You sonvabitch, get up! Get up, for I take a notion to rub your face in it!"

The whimperer kept on making the dog sounds.

The snorer turned back to Paul who was standing there with the cup in his hands, wanting to ask for another, but not sure this was the best time to do it.

"Sonvabitch's been in here for two days and ain't got up off the floor yet," the snorer said, making the words sound as though somehow Paul were to blame for this.

"He's a junkie, huh?" Paul felt he had to say something.

"Why hell yes! He ain't even worth the floor he's lyin' on, I can tell ya that. Well, by god, he ain't gonna piss all over this floor and get away with it. This ain't no damn toilet. It's a goddamn public jail, that's what it is; but no, he don't know that. Been lyin' there moanin' and whinin' for the past two nights like a damn fice dog. Bastud!"

He spit out this last word, giving it special emphasis, as he took the cup from Paul.

"Thanks a lot for the water," said Paul.

"Ah, hell, it ain't nothin'," he said with a wave of his hand. He was close enough now so that Paul could see the few, large blackheads in his

nose. There was a slight growth of beard on his face, but it was almost white in color. He looked back down at the whimperer, then at the puddle. Paul knew he was wondering about the roaches.

"I killed the roaches," said Paul, looking directly into his face. "I couldn't sleep with 'em crawlin' all over me, so I killed 'em and kicked 'em out there. Then I was sittin' here and a rat came...."

"Oh, you met Uncle Thomas, huh?" asked the snorer, a big grin lighting up his face. "Hell, he'd eat anything in this damn place 'cept the bars, and he'd eat them if he could get his teeth around 'em." He laughed suddenly, showing a mouthful of gold. "I call 'im that cause I useta have an uncle named Thomas who was jus' like 'im. He could put away more food by himself than any three men I ever did know. "Yep," he said; "old Uncle Thomas," his voice trailing off as though he were thinking about the real uncle.

"Well, anyway," said Paul. "The rat..." then seeing the snorer glance up from the puddle "Uncle Thomas was eatin' the roaches when this puddle started to come out from the...."

"I know it! I know it!" exploded the snorer, his eyes getting angry again. "Sonvabitch is a damn baby; that's all he is! Wets his pants like one and cries like one too. If he was a man, he'd get up and sleep on the bed, not on the floor like a damn dog! You hear me, you junkie?" he shouted, bending low, his face almost touching the bars. "You ain' nothin' but a goddamn junkie!"

"Oh Jesus, mister. Please can I have a cigarette?"

The whimperer's voice consisted of a series of whines, each one trailing off into the other. Paul hated it, and he tried to picture him lying on the floor in the puddle.

"No, by god, I ain' gonna give ya no cigarette! Look what ya did, ya damn baby! Pissed all over yourself and messed up the whole floor! If you'd get up on the bed like a man, I might give ya one. Get up, goddamnit!"

"Oh, please, mister. I'm so awful sick, I can't hardly move none at all. Ohhhh. Oh, Jesus help me."

"Jesus ain' here, ya bastud," shouted the snorer, "but by god, I'll help ya. I'll help ya knock a knot on your head as big as my fist!" and as he said this, he balled up his fist, shaking it at the whimperer.

Paul decided he couldn't wait any longer.

"I wonder if I could have some more," he said, his eyes glancing at the cup for an instant, then back up into the snorer's face.

"Oh," the snorer said, as though he were sorry he had forgotten about it. He started to add something to this, but Paul interrupted him by sticking his hand through the bars.

"My name's Harris, Paul Harris."

"Oh. Well, Hardrock's my name," he said, taking Paul's hand in his and giving it a quick, hard squeeze. "It ain't really my name," he said, his face clouding for an instant. "My real name's Hardin, Raymond Wesley

Hardin, but I never did like it as much as I did Hardrock." He glanced down at the cup. "Wait a minute, and I'll bring ya some more."

He walked back up to his cell, talking all the while in a loud voice so Paul could hear him.

"Yeah, they brought that feller in here the other night and him so weak, he couldn' even stand up. Puked all over the place. Janitor cleaned that up. And now, look what he's done gone and did. God only knows what the sonvabitch'll do next." He laughed suddenly, despite the tone of disgust in his voice.

While he talked, the whimperer kept asking for a cigarette, unaware that no one was listening to him. Hardrock came back and handed the full cup to Paul, being careful not to spill any of it as the cup changed hands at the bars. He had an unlit cigarette in his mouth now, and taking a large country match from his pocket, brought it down on one of the bars in a careless swipe. Then waiting until the flare died down, he lit the cigarette slowly and walked down to the end of the block, tossing the match into the GI can. When he came back, he squat down just outside the whimperer's cell, making sure to plant his feet astride the puddle. He inhaled deeply, blowing a thick cloud of smoke into the cell.

"Oh, jesus, mister. Please lemme have a cigarette. Please, mister," Paul wished he would shut up.

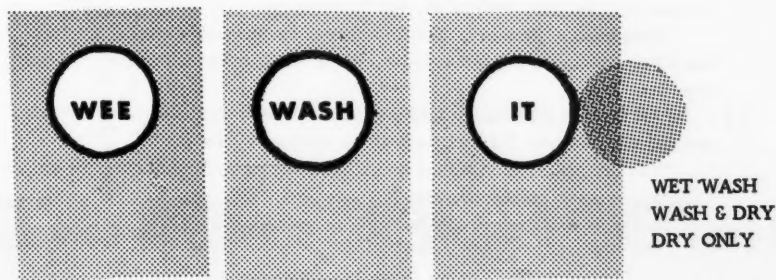
"Shuddup, goddamnit! I gave ya some yesterday, didn' I? Whad 'ja do with 'em?"

"Oh, yes sir, mister. I know you did, but I done smoked 'em all. It wasn' but three of 'em, and I..."

"Why, you sonvabitch!" said Hardrock, standing up and leaning back against the bars of the corridor. "Here the doc gave ya a shot last night and two codeine pills, and now you're wantin' another cigarette after I done already give ya some. Ya greedy bastud!"

"Mister, he didn' give me no shot. All he gave me was two blue heavens, and they done wore off a long time ago. I..."

"Goddamnit, don' lie to me like that!" shouted Hardrock, "when I was right here and seen 'im give ya that shot! You sonvabitch! Gotta good mind not to give ya nothin'!"



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"Oh, I'm sorry, mister, but I'm feelin' so sick and all...."

"Yeah, by god, and if ya ate a damn food once in a while, ya might not be so sick."

"I'm awful sorry, mister, but...."

"Where you from, boy?" asked Hardrock, turning his face away from the whimperer, as though he was not there. The whimperer kept on whining.

"Goddamnit; will you shuddup and be quiet, so I can talk with this man here? Ya damn bastud! You ain' got the manners of a mule!"

"I'll be quiet, mister, honest I will."

"Well then, shuddup, goddamnit!"

"Yes sir, mis...."

"Shuddup!" yelled Hardrock, his voice rising at the end in impatience. The whimperer became quiet. Hardrock looked at Paul and motioned with his cigarette. "Want one? I forgot to ask ya."

"No thanks," said Paul. "I gave 'em up."

"I should too," said Hardrock. "Shoulda done it years ago when I was your age. Bad for your lungs," and as he said this, he inhaled deeply, letting the smoke stream out slowly from his large nostrils. Suddenly, he looked down at the puddle again, then turned around.

"Hey! Mistah Sumley? Man pissed on the floor in here! How bout bringin' me a mop, so's I can clean it up!"

Paul wondered how he could yell so loud, if cigarettes were bad for his lungs. In a few seconds, following the sound of a key scraping in the lock, the door swung open, and a man's face showed in the light.

"Did what?" he asked slowly, and then looked down at the puddle. "Oh."

"Ain' it a shame, mistah Sumley, puttin' somethin' like that in here with me," and he jerked his thumb at the whimperer. "If you bring me a mop, I'll clean it up myself. S'getting so bad, ya can't breathe in here."

The face withdrew from the door and reappeared a minute later, followed by his body and a mop in his hands. He handed it to Hardrock through the bars and started to leave. Paul decided to give it a try.

"Uh, officer Sumley? I ain' got any water in here, cause the sink's broke. And I was jus' wonderin' if you could unlock me, so I won' hafta keep botherin' Hardrock here to bring me some all the time. I sure am thirsty."

Sumley glanced at Hardrock as though waiting to hear his opinion on the matter, his own face void of any visible emotion.

"He's been a good boy, mistah Sumley, but his sink's busted sure 'nuf, and I been havin' to bring 'im water. He'll be okay out here; don' you worry none bout that."

"All right," said Sumley, "but if you two don't quit that damn hollerin' and shoutin' in here, I'll lock ya both up again. Y'hear me?"

"Yes sir, officer," said Paul and smiled at him as he unlocked the cell.

"Thank you a lot, mister Sumley."

You fat sonofabitch, he thought

sumley acknowledged all this with a short nod of his head and giving a low grunt, went out slamming both doors behind him. Paul stood in the cell, wanting to step out into the corridor, but finding his legs still and unwilling to move. Hardrock was the first to speak.

"Here, boy. C'mon down to my cell, and you can drink all ya want to. I'm gonna get the bucket and clean up this damn puddle, for it stinks up the whole block."

Hardrock walked on up to his cell, and Paul stepped into the corridor. The whimperer was lying on his right side close to the bars and doubled up as though he were cold. His hands were clasped and shoved down between his legs at a point under which the puddle seemed to originate. He kept shivering, as though he were cold, and his eyes were half open, the lids fluttering weakly. He lay there with his lips trembling, the tip of his tongue flicking itself along their outer edges. All the while he kept whining and rubbing his bare feet together under the bunk.

"Don' feel sorry none for that bastud," said Hardrock, returning with a bucket. "He ain' worth it." He started to clean up the puddle.

Paul said nothing more and walked up to the cell. He was not prepared for what he saw. The first thing that drew his attention was the bottom bunk. It was made up as neat and clean as a hospital bed; the sheets and blanket pulled tight in army style. There was even a clean slip on the little pillow. The top bunk was covered with sheets of newspaper upon which lay a few toilet articles, some pieces of underwear, a copy of Life and a large box of country matches. He noticed that the walls and floor were spotless; then he saw the scrub brush lying under the sink next to the box of soap powder. Filling up the cup, he drank quickly, then filled it up again and walked back down to where Hardrock was finishing up with the puddle.

"Hey, mister new man, have you got a . . . ?"

"Goddamnit! Didn' I tell you not to say anything? Huh? Well, didn' I?" shouted Hardrock.

"Yes sir, mister," came the whine.

"Well then, shuddup like I said, or you ain' gonna get nothin'."

"I'm awful sorry, mister, but I sure do...."

"Ahhh, goddamnit. Here!" said Hardrock, and taking two cigarettes from the pack, threw them into the cell. "Sonvabitch if I can' stand that damn

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whinin' anymore. Makes me sick to my stomach." One of the cigarettes rolled off the whimperer's body and into the puddle, but he snatched it up with surprising speed and after shaking it for a few seconds, laid it on a dry portion of the floor. The other one, he managed to get into his mouth, but his lips and hands were shaking so, that Paul wondered how he would ever light it. The whimperer fumbled in his pocket and took out two matches. He struck one on the floor weakly, but the head came to pieces. He looked up at Hardrock, starting to apologize, even before the words came out.

"They got all wet," he said and struck the other one as he spoke, getting the same results.

"Well, I'll be goddamned," said Hardrock. "I seen some scraggly-ass men in my time, but you take the cake. You wanna know somethin', you bastud?" He leaned closer to the bars, his voice dropping almost to a whimper.

The whimperer nodded slowly, and his eyes became still.

"You ain' worth two turds in counterfeit horseshit!"

"Yes sir, mister. Now can I please have a light?"

The whimperer got up on one elbow and took the three matches that Hardrock handed him. He finally lit one of them, but his hands and lips were shaking so badly, he hardly managed to scorch the paper on the end of the cigarette. Hardrock watched him all the while and shaking his head slowly from side to side, bent down and lit the whimperer's cigarette with a sigh of obvious disgust. The whimperer's eyes opened wide and stared hard at the match flame, as he puffed on the cigarette, inhaling deeply and keeping the smoke down for a long time before letting it come out.

"Oh, thank you mister. Oh, Jesus. Oh, thank you," he said, lying there and making little murmurs and squeals of pleasure. They left him under a cloud of smoke and went back to the cell.

Hardrock dumped the contents of the bucket into his toilet and filling it up with water from the sink, poured it out again. He stuck his head near it and sniffed once or twice to make sure it was clean, then set it down under the sink. After washing his hands and wiping them on his slacks, he lay down on the bunk and lit a cigarette. He drew on it once or twice and clasped his hands behind his head, strangely silent. Paul turned over the bucket and sat down, waiting. Hardrock took another long draw off the cigarette and began to talk.

He was originally from Denver, but he'd spent the last winter in Florida working on the new super highway out of Miami. It was getting so he didn't like the cold anymore. He'd been on his way west like Paul, when they picked him up that night. He had explained to them that he was on his way out to Needles where a road construction job was supposed to kick off in about a month. He told them that he wasn't a bum or anything and that he worked hard for an honest living; but the young cop had told him to shut up—that he was just an old fart with a big mouth. That's when Hardrock had let him have it with his fist, full in the face, and the other one had blackjacked him from behind. When

Paul told him the bruise still showed on the cop's face, he lifted his eyes for a second and then laughed so hard, he started coughing. He finally stopped and became silent for a moment, as he caught his breath. The judge had gone easy on him since he hadn't been drunk or anything, and also because he was old. He got thirty days. He hadn't been in too big a hurry to get to Needles anyway, said Hardrock, as the job wasn't due to start for a month yet; and he figured the rest here would do him good. It was all free, he said, and he got the paper every morning and magazines to read. They treated him real nice too, since he let them know he wasn't afraid of them--any of them.

He finished with the cigarette and putting it out in a small tin can, folded his hands across his stomach and took a deep breath, letting it out noisily between his lips. His hands were big and brown with strong, blunt fingers, the nails long and cracked, but clean.

"Hell, I don't mind it so bad in here," he said. The grub ain't half as bad as some I been in, and they don't bother me none a'tall. Yep. Be outa here in another week and then on my way to the job. Why, you wanna know some-thin', boy? If I'd a gone out there a month ago like I started to, I'd probably spent all my money on liquor or dice or some other damn fool thing and wound up in jail in the bargain. Yep. Best damn thing I ever did do--hittin' that bastud. If I had it to do over, I'd hit 'im again, only this time I'd hit 'im a real lick. An old fart, huh?" he asked himself, smiling as he did. "By god, I bet this here's one old fart he don't forget for a long time. You shoulda seen the look on his face when I swung on 'im. Hell, he looked like somebody'd jus' told 'im the world was comin' to an end." He looked at Paul suddenly, his eyes widening. "Say you can still see where I hit 'im, huh?"

Paul nodded and broke into a smile.

"Well, I'll be damned. I'll just be goddamned if that don't make me feel good. I wonder what that sonvabitch tells folks here in town when they asked what happened to his face." He gave a sudden burst of laughter, then became quiet, lighting up another cigarette.

Paul sat there as he talked and forgot about everything else but the sound of his voice. Hardrock rambled on freely, swearing easily and carelessly as he did, giving the words no special emphasis to separate them from the others. It was almost as though he were not conscious of the difference. Finally the big door opened, and Sumley brought in their breakfast, pouring each of them

MAID - RITE

SANDWICHES THAT MAKE EATING A PLEASURE

15 E. Washington, Iowa City, Open from 6 a.m. - 1 a.m.

a tin cup full of steaming, black coffee before he went out. In each of the tins were two biscuits, some fatback, a serving of rice and gravy and some Karo syrup for the biscuits. He had also left each of them a tablespoon. Paul gulped the coffee, feeling it burn as it went down, the warmth spreading through his stomach. He gave his fatback to Hardrock, and Hardrock gave him one of his biscuits. When they had finished, Hardrock stood up from where he had been sitting and very carefully, picked up a few crumbs that had fallen on the floor.

"Brings roaches," he said, as he saw Paul watching him. "Look here," and picking up an old newspaper from under the bunk, he walked over to the GI can and threw the crumbs into it, brushing his hands together to get rid of all of them. Then he separated the paper, wadding the sheets up into four or five loose balls. After sticking one of them through the bars and lighting it, he dropped it into the can, and stood there watching it burn. Then he threw the other pieces in and peered down into the can, smiling to himself as he did.

"Lookit 'em go, boy! Jus' lookit 'em!"

Paul looked. All along the bottom and insides of the can, twenty or thirty roaches were trying to climb out to escape the flames, but the sides were too slippery. The two of them stood there listening to the bodies pop and crackle as the flames caught up with them. Hardrock spit neatly through the bars and into the can, as the fire died down.

"Serves the bastuds right," he said, "for botherin' the life out of a man." Then turning to the window, he pushed it open so that the light from the early morning fell upon the floor of the corridor. Paul looked out the window, but all he could see was a brick wall ten yards away. "S'gonna be another nice day, but hot," said Hardrock and walked back into the cell. He talked on while Paul washed up in the sink, feeling better after he was done. Then Sumley came in and told Paul to get ready to go--that it was seven o'clock, and he would be leaving soon. Hardrock stood up after Sumley had left and looked Paul hard in the face, his eyes narrowing for a second.

"Listen ta me, boy," he said. "Whatever you do, don' let 'em hand you any shit and don' ever be fraid of 'em. It jus' bothers the pure livin' hell out of 'em when they see you ain' afraid of 'em. By god, look at me. I may be fifty-eight, but I'm the toughest old fart they ever smelled. Here, feel this," he said, and flexed his right arm over his head.

Paul stared at the biceps. It was the size of a large apple.

"Go head and feel it," he said, smiling proudly.

Paul felt it, giving it a hard squeeze. It was like a stone lodged under his skin. "Yeah, that's really somethin'," he said, looking up into Hardrock's face.

"See what I'm talkin' bout, boy?"

Sumley returned and looked at the two of them. "Okay Harris, les go, boy." The three of them walked down to the corridor door, and Sumley walked over near the big door and waited, the keys jangling in his hand.

"Well, Hardrock, maybe I'll run into ya out in California later on. Take

care of yourself and thanks for everything." Paul stuck out his hand quickly, feeling it being enveloped in the big, leathery palm. It felt good.

"You too, boy, and I hope ya good luck. Member what I told ya now," and he glanced in Sumley's direction as he said this, then winked at Paul. Paul winked back.

"Les go, boy," said Sumley; and they went out, the big door clanging shut behind them.

After getting his bag and money from the sergeant, he went downstairs with two policemen and got into the Ford. A few minutes later, they were outside of town, and the car pulled up near a sign that read: "You Are Leaving Mumford, We Hope Your Stay Has Been a Pleasant One, Come Back Soon," and underneath in smaller letters, "Courtesy Mumford Chamber of Commerce." Paul got out quickly without waiting to be told. He stood there with his face blank and looked at the two of them. The cop nearest him looked up, and Paul didn't like his face. He didn't like it at all, and he stared back at him hard, being careful not to smile.

"Now, you be keerful, fella, that we don' catch ya comin' back through here again. If we do, it's gonna be a lot more'n any one night in jail. Y'unnerstan, boy?"

Paul said nothing, but gave a sharp nod with his head, while keeping the same look on his face. The cop turned to the driver.

"All right, les go." The car turned around and was gone. He stared after them, his eyes squinting at the bright sun, then cleared his throat and spit in the direction of the town.

"Son of a bitch." He pronounced the words slowly and almost as though he were saying some kind of prayer. Reaching up and scratching the whiskers on his neck, he knew he'd get to shave tonight in Albuquerque. He could make it there by supper, if he had any luck at all. He had the whole day ahead of him, and it was a nice day.

The sun had cleared the plains now and was climbing over the town. He shut his eyes, feeling its warmth press lightly on the lids, and he saw Hardrock's face. It was smiling. What d'ya know about that, thought Paul. Fifty-eight years old and slammin' that cop when he knew damn well what he'd get for it. He wished he'd a been there to see it. He'd a spent another night in there just to have seen it. Hardrock's face vanished suddenly, and now he saw a clear image of the big man swinging on the cop and the look of surprise, disbelief, and then pain on the cop's face.

He turned and started walking away from the sun, his mouth set in a tight grin, the bag swinging freely at his side. After a few minutes, he could feel the sun sliding over his body, the heat spreading down through his neck and shoulders and into his back. As his legs slowly loosened up, he began to take longer steps, enjoying the feel of the hard ground beneath him. The grin broke and he laughed out loud suddenly, glad he was alone on the road where no one could hear him. Then all at once and without really knowing why, he began to sing. ●

TO THE NEW PLAYWRIGHT: A WARNING AND A HOPE

Dr. William Reardon

The number of people who think that they can write plays is astronomical; the number of people who do write plays is prodigious; the number of people who write plays worth a damn is minute. If you belong to the first group mentioned above--and if you are still talking about writing a play, and haven't, you belong--be a good fellow, get yourself a nice job somewhere, and stop bothering people. If you belong to the third group, you're not reading this article--you're too busy to do so. Obviously, then, this article is directed to the second group, those who do write plays, but whose plays may as yet be unrecognized.

Let us first dispense with the all-too-familiar crutch of the unrecognized artist--they can't perceive my talent. It must be concluded that they, in this instance, refers to the producers and agents who have rejected the artist's work. It is admitted that producers and agents are not infallible, and numerous articles attest to the fact. But one must also recognize, that although one individual, or ten, committed the blatant error of failing to see the latent power in, for example, "The Green Pastures," someone ultimately saw its worth. This latter point seems to be constantly overlooked. What they demand in a script is quality--that a script be more than passable. Since they are putting their money, or someone's money, into that script, they are justified in asking that the play be distinctive. The scarcity of really distinctive scripts passing through their hands may be noted by reviewing the results of any given season on Broadway. Instead of condemning them for failing to perceive talent, we should give them medals for bravery for having been willing to produce scripts which make Russian roulette a good gamble in comparison. The bald truth unquestionably is that the scripts produced were the best to come to the attention of the agents and producers; if better scripts had been available, they would have done them instead. They gamble on the less than distinctive in the fond and rather pathetic hope that the audience will be in a semi-somnolent condition and accept it. Unfortunately, throughout the ages, audiences have shown a remarkable ability to wake up half way through the play and devote the latter half of the evening to a thorough damning of the entire proceedings. American audiences are no different; hence, the number of flops in any stated year. In place of the crutch sometimes used, let us, then, substitute the following fact: there are a number of producers and agents who are constantly reading scripts which have been submitted. They stand to make money on these scripts--much money. They also stand to lose. There are enough of them around so that if you are capable of writing a script which brings them to the point of considering production and its gambles, one of them will take a chance. That fact is proven each year on Broadway. But to get a script on Broadway, if you are a new writer, it probably means that you have written one of the best twelve new scripts that year. If odds trouble you, Irish Sweepstakes tickets may be purchased in the next booth.



SELF-PORTRAIT

Andrew Kincannon

1956

Odds, however, do not generally trouble the playwright. His plays may be pessimistic, but he is an incurable optimist. No one can ever tell you whether you will or will not write a play that will be a hit--such announcements are made after the fact. But as you write, there are a few simple and rather general questions which you might ask yourself. For example, do you write plays for yourself? Do you write for a few choice esoteric friends? Or do you write for an audience of reasonably intelligent Americans?

If you write for yourself, it may well be laudable and economical therapy, and with the shortage of psychiatrists, socially commendable; if you write for a few esoteric friends, then you should be content with your audience, and the cheese and crackers accompanying an occasional highball; if you are writing for an audience of reasonably intelligent Americans--and that audience exists!--then you are at least writing for the right group.

Of whom do you write? Have you ever finished your play and then asked yourself objectively--who cares about these people in it? Why should anyone care? As the author, you may not be sufficiently objective to answer these questions yourself upon completion of your play. Your wife and friends will probably err by being either non-critical or hyper-critical. It helps if you have someone with whom you are not personally involved to read your play at this moment. The value of this person lies in this: he holds no brief, either you made him care or you didn't. And unless you make someone care about your play and its characters, you will remain unproduced.

How much do you hate being dull? How sensitive are you to those moments of dullness which you have created? Can you read your play to a small group of guests (who suddenly have found themselves a captive audience) and accept the restless stirring for what it is, or do you instead tend to classify them for life ever after as a collection of moronic clods? If you really believe that the most heinous crime a writer may commit is to be dull, then you are again on the right track.

If you have written a play for a reasonably intelligent audience of Americans, in which you presented characters about whom we could care, and maintained our interest without faltering into dullness, you probably will make some agent or producer give your script a second look. You are probably also a very talented young man. For although some writers are able to fulfill these three requirements for one act, or even two, only the exceptional writer holds them all the way through. Grant, then, that you have succeeded. You mail your manuscript, and then go back to write. It may be a couple of years before you get a nibble, and in the meantime, you should have produced another script.

In the opinion of this writer, who reads a fairly healthy number of solicited and unsolicited manuscripts each year in the hopes of finding talent and a script for production, the young American artist is in an excellent position. Not only at Iowa, where with grants, aid, and productions is he encouraged and flayed, but in many colleges throughout the country, the new playwright

is being courted. Contests, awards, scholarships, productions--chance after chance await the playwright and his play. The script thus worked out in production is even more acceptable to the agent and producer for a serious reading. There is absolutely no reason for any young playwright to despair today. If you have been unable to interest any of these groups in production, or have been unable to win any contest or award, it may be time to face reality--you may have written a real clinker.

The warning has been mentioned, and the hope. The conclusion contains a portion of both, for it deals with the indispensable part of playwriting known as rewriting. The scene that your critics pronounced dull last week, is still dull, if all you did was to alter a few lines, a word here, or a cut there. Rewriting is the final challenge of the writer. Is your script better with a new story for these characters; new characters for this old story; a new idea; a brand new start? Your willingness to throw the whole script away and start anew may be the difference between a mediocre play and a script that will make the grade. Thus the hope is expressed that you will rewrite after honest criticism, and the warning accompanies the hope--if you don't, you'll starve. ❁



ON MR. ERIC BENTLEY

There once was a critic most snotty,
A man of the new literati
Pans Maxwell and Gene,
The commercial machine,
And operas by G. C. Menotti.

This critic, a Bentley named Eric,
Proclaims from a place stratospheric,
"If it's playing on Broadway
It's bound to be tawdry,
And isn't at all esoteric."

J. G. Severns

Note: Eric Bentley, drama critic for the NEW REPUBLIC, author and editor of numerous books of theater criticism and collected plays, Branders Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia University, finds much wrong with the New York commercial theater. Mr. Bentley is constantly casting a jaundiced eye toward the plays and playwrights that Americans most respect.

THE MARK OF THE PROFESSIONAL

Fragment from a novel in progress

William M. Murray

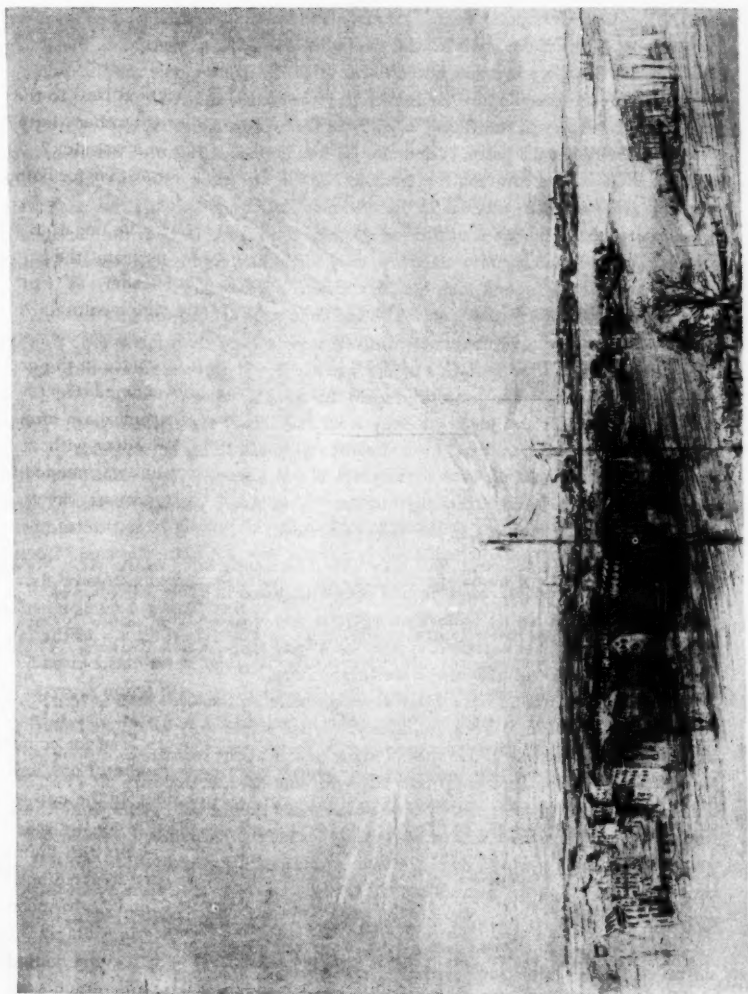
Michael's mind worked furiously as he mechanically walked Nell to the door of the shop. What was her motive in wanting to visit his brother Marty? Surely it couldn't be as simple as wanting to visit someone who was sick? That was old fashioned; people didn't have reasons as simple as that for doing things anymore. Not if they were half alive.

As was his habit when he felt his mind begin to overwork, he began to roll the silver watch chain (inherited from his father) dangling from the pocket of his brown waistcoat, between his thumb and index finger, as if in this way he could still keep his finger on a reality which his mind refused to give him.

When she had left he stood, almost like another beam, square in the doorway of his shop, frowning in disgust out at the muddled, cowed street. It would be weeks before the tar showed grey and hard on the street again after the fair. A man wouldn't be able to stir a foot outside his own door without being up to his eyes in shit. Michael felt stifled by it all; what was needed in the village was a touch of a clean, professional civilization— a smart way of doing things. A dirty sheep, crusts of dung on its black backside, trotted by him, baaing nervously, poking its nose in shop doors, looking for some flock to belong to. Across the street from him, outside Clancy's pub, five or six farmers were singing, some of them sitting on the red Guinness barrels upended on the curbstone, more of them waving ferruled ashplants in the air in the intensity of their song. . . . bawling, hoarse voices, trying to shout each other instead of trying to sing...no respect for the words or the tune...was irreverence necessary so that you could live a half way happy life?...

Michael knew the song. An old come-all-ye... a country song for country people to sing to themselves in their lonely cottages in the middle of nowhere ...miles into the mountains from the village...by the turflight in the cottages at night...when they were most aware of how small they were in darkness...they sang the song to keep themselves from being too alone with themselves... THE FOGGY DEW... a long time ago he had first heard it...riding out of the village on the horse and car of one of his father's friends...to spend the summer holidays in the country...riding out into the mysterious black mountains...where he would see no one from the world he was leaving behind for three months...and he had quickly forgotten the village in imagining the mysteries of the dark, isolated world waiting before him...he had learned early of the great weapon he had in his head for cutting himself off from things.

As he stood in the doorway now, he reflected that there were moments of his three months isolation in the country when he had felt least alone. The dry wheezing voice of the old man came back to him singing... "...and I wandered out alone in the foggy, foggy dew..." Michael, a boy, sat, knees pressed tightly under his chin, his face on fire from the red glow of the smoul-



SKYCITY

Andrew W. Rush

1957

dering coals in the open hearth...outside the area of the fire's glow, darkness in the cottage kitchen...he let the fire burn into him, not minding because the old man sang a song that burned him too. He learned the song...lost...learning...not knowing how he learned...afterwards singing in his soprano, the old man's song...stumbling slightly in the words...not saying them the way the old man said them...because he was young...and they disintegrated a little in him...not having the tradition of the old man. He was proud when the voices of the men who sat in the darkness listening, spoke...he could tell who was speaking by the way the red glow of the pipes, red, in the darkness moved..."Good heart, Micheawl"...they knew him by his Irish name then..."Faith, we have a second John McCormack on our hands,"

But that was all in the past. The old man sang an old song for an old time...old Ireland. Michael saw himself now tearing the useless song to bits and scattering it, like confetti, to the winds. Boy's pleasures were only for boys; or childish drunken men singing in the streets.

Ireland's pride and joy! But they would be happy for a while yet. Nothing of the rest of the world, what he had seen and heard in his seven years in Liverpool, had caught up with them yet. It was ahead. They would bleed like sores that had been gathering puss for a long time, when it came. There were no children or islands in the world anymore.

Ireland's pride and joy! But they would be happy for a while yet. Nothing of the rest of the world, what he had seen and heard in his seven years in Liverpool, had caught up with them yet. It was ahead. They would bleed like sores that had been gathering puss for a long time, when it came. There were no children or islands in the world anymore.

In disgust he turned back into his shop, banging the door behind him. His thoughts reverted to Nora and Marty. What would they be doing alone together in the bedroom. He should know better about women and especially Nell. That she wouldn't jump into bed with any man at the drop of a hat. But Marty wasn't anyone. He wasn't much more than a boy. And sometimes women found them more attractive than grown men. Ah, how could he tell what another person would do? He was capable of almost anything himself. How could he judge the actions of others when he thought of himself in this way.

He picked up a man's pants he had been working on and tried to put the matter out of his mind with work.

* * * * *

Nell noticed the fat, heavily varicosed legs of Michael's mother under the raised hem of her black dress as they climbed the stairs to Marty's bedroom. She saw herself, years from now, in the same condition, and wished, for a moment, she could tell Mrs. Galvin something which would communicate her sympathy. Mrs. Galvin paused with her hand on the bannister; she puffed and wheezed from the exercise, then smiled down at Nell. "He'll be delighted to see you. There's no one he thinks more highly of," she said.

That was enough for Nell. She nodded back. There was no need to say anything special- it was enough to talk and, somehow, when you talked right about anything, everything else was understood.

Nell wondered about Michael. She had been more embarrassed for his sake than for her own, because she had nothing to hide from him. She had read his thoughts, though, and guessed the rest from her familiarity with the way his mind worked. Because she had seen what he had implied in questioning her about knowing where Marty's room was, he had made her aware of another aspect of going to visit Marty that had not, until then, entered her mind. She wanted to see Marty because he was sick. She felt vaguely disturbed with herself that there might be another reason, but, if there was, it was so far back in her mind that it wasn't important.

They were to the top of the stairs and Mrs. Galvin knocked lightly on the door "Marty...Marty, someone to see you."

"Maybe he's asleep. I'll come back later when he's awake," Nell found herself saying.

"Oh, don't go way so fast. I'll wake him up. He needs someone like you to talk to," Mrs. Galvin hushed her, turning the brass knob on the door and waddling fussily into the room.

It was the first time Nell had ever been in the room and she took it in as unobtrusively as she could. Marty was lying on his back, straight out, his brown tousled head resting on his hands, both elbows sticking out from him like the wings of an angel. The black eiderdown with the red roses, he had pulled up to his chin and was staring at the large window opposite the bed which let in a lemon evening light, washing the room in church color. He did not turn his head to look at her.

"Talk a little of some of Michael's practical sense into him," Mrs. Galvin whispered to Nell, shuffling out of the room.

Nell found herself wanting to tell Mrs. Galvin that she wouldn't be staying very long. She had a moment of panic in which she wasn't quite sure that she was able to recognize any object in the room, not even Marty, even though they should be all familiar. It was a momentary impression; she silently blamed Michael for it and then tried to reassert her own good sense. She was in a bedroom- no more unusual than her own. The dresser showed her her re-

Richey's

THE STORE WITH THE PINK LACE FRONT

WOMEN'S FASHION CENTER IN IOWA CITY

flection in the mirror; it was hers. The black crucifix looked down at her from the wall. And in the bed was Marty, her shy, temperamental boy, who was satisfied to hunt and fish all day; who bothered no one who did not bother him.

She was reassured and plunked herself down at the foot of Marty's bed. "What did you go nearly getting yourself killed for?" she lightly demanded of him.

"I wasn't killed was I? Isn't that enough for you," he answered, sitting up abruptly.

She knew then that he had been aware of her every movement since she had come into the room. He was a clever one. "Michael told me you deliberately went after the stallion," she went on.

"And why should he care whether I did nor no?"

"I know it's none of my business," Nell began, trying to approach the matter as delicately as possible, "but I want to know why you tried to stop the stallion when there were others that could have done it just as well."

He turned his grey eyes open and unguarded into hers. She bowed her head in confusion, drawing patterns over the eiderdown with her forefinger. Why did he look at her like that now? But she couldn't mistake that look. It was not like Michael's - always sizing you up. She had the feeling that Marty wasn't seeing her at all but that he was searching for something which was neither in her nor anywhere else. But he knew what it was, so it must be in himself. She knew that he worshipped her in his fashion and that his look was supposed to tell her that. She could only feel a soft pity for him. She would have liked to take him in her arms, cuddle him, kiss his eyes and stroke his brown hair. But that was all. She checked herself wondering if Michael had been right. She looked at Marty and trusted the immediate response she had - which was still that of a mother. "Well, aren't you going to tell me why you did it?" she spoke gently.

"Ah, you'd go back and tell Michael," broke miserably from him.

"I'll promise not to breathe a word of it to him."

"I did it to show off because I knew he was looking out the window," Marty answered, throwing himself back on the bed. "He thinks he can do everything better than I can. I wanted to show him there was something I could do that he never could."

"So that's it. That's a fairly honest reason and there's nothing to get upset about," Nell consoled him.

"Why shouldn't I get upset about it? You're going to marry him because he can do everything better than I can."

"That won't be the reason at all if I do marry him. Here," she continued, tucking the blankets and eiderdown around him, "settle yourself down under the clothes." When she sat again at the foot of the bed, she noticed the way he stretched his legs out and moved them close to her. Then he began to speak slowly:



SHIP OF FOOLS

Frank Sampson

1957

"Dresses are odd things."

"Now, what makes you say something like that? They're no more odd than pants on a man."

"Ah, they are. I saw a woman's dress once. 'Twas above her knees. There's a terrible difference between a woman's skin and her dress."

"You shouldn't be having thoughts like that. It's a mortal sin."

"Don't you have mad thoughts like that yourself, sometimes, don't you?" he asked, pushing himself into a sitting position.

"Marty, you should tell those things in confession and not be talking about them to me."

"Yerra, what use would it be to tell things like that in confession? I can't help my eyes if they see that way. Michael never tells things like that to you, I suppose. The two of ye don't talk much when ye're courting in the shop at night."

"That's an awful thing to say. That you were spying on us. How would you like it if I told this to Michael?"

"I'd tell him you let me kiss you and do something else to you and 'twould never be the same between ye again."

"There's an awful devil in you to think of things like that," she answered knowing well that she should leave now because she half suspected what he was leading up to.

"Gimme a kiss and I'll never say another word to you like that again," he suddenly asked, leaning forward to her.

"I can't kiss you. You know that very well. It would be wrong and unfair to Michael."

"That's a lie. A lie," he cried. "It's me you love, not Michael. I can see it. I can see it."

He had thrown off all the bedclothes and was kneeling before her now on all fours. The twisted, pale face revolted Nell; the partly open mouth reminded her of an idiot boy she had once seen and her impulse now was to run out of the room. She continued to stare at him, however, and then she was sorry. She saw that his night-shirt came mid-way up on his belly and that he was not excited at all in the way she knew men were excited when they wanted badly to kiss you. He was an innocent at the back of all his talk and he appeared to be suffering. Her heart warmed and she bent quickly and kissed him. She felt his lips shut tight and dry against hers. Not once, in the few seconds that she held the kiss, did his mouth loosen from its tight line against hers; nor did he raise his hands off the bed or run them roughly over her as Michael did. And there was no pressure of his mouth on hers.

"Now will you get back under the clothes and stay there," she said, drawing away from him.

"Michael can do it much better than me, can't he? Don't tell him I kissed you."

"There's no need to if you don't. And it was lovely. Every bit as good as

Michael's," she tried to console him.

As she turned to leave, Michael was standing in the doorway. She did not know how long he had been there.

"Ye're a nice pair, the both of ye," Michael snapped, walking into the room, running his right hand feverishly through his bushy black hair. "You be-having like a tramp," he addressed Nell. "Just as I expected. And that little shit arse sneaking behind my back to do his dirty thieving."

"You don't understand what happened at all, Michael," Nell timidly began. "And if I tried to explain it to you, you'd only think worse."

"What's so hard to understand about it. Don't tell me I can't believe the evidence of my own eyes and ears. I've been listening to ye for the past five minutes, making out like two animals. What explaining can you do. The reason is between your legs, my fine lady."

"That's a dirty, low-minded thing to say, Michael," Nell answered, coloring.

"I'm only telling you what you are and you don't like it. There never was a woman that could keep her legs closed if she got half a chance."

"If your mother heard you...."

"What do I give a good god damn about my mother? What has she got to do with this? How long do I have to be under obligation to her for giving birth to me?"

Nell had felt a momentary revulsion for Marty which she had conquered with pity: Michael horrified her. She was suddenly acutely aware of every nerve in her body; goose pimples rose along her arm and in her thighs; she knew she was in the presence of something which was terrifying and evil. "Michael Galvin," she began, losing all sense of herself, but feeling a deep instinct to strike out in defense of what she felt he had attacked in her, "you know nothing about the feelings of women. You will never fall in love and no woman could ever possibly love you."

Whether it was a curse or a prediction she was making, Michael could not tell from the tone of her voice. He stood stiffly, almost at attention, feeling her slap him three times across the face and then vaguely he knew she had left the room.

books SOME GOOD | SOME BAD

HAWKEYE BOOK STORE * ACROSS FROM SCHAEFFER HALL

He had always wanted to do the right thing. Wasn't that why he had come back from England so that he could support his mother? He wanted to behave towards Nell as a man was supposed to behave towards a woman. He did all the things that were expected of him in the village, lived soberly, went to church on Sunday even though he didn't believe in it. But he had said something to Nell here in this room which he realized was a truth about himself that had lain buried a long time. He wanted to say what he had said to her. And now he was free of it.

But where could he turn now. He had to believe in something immediately; he was tired of asking himself questions. He couldn't look into himself for answers anymore. When he looked into himself he saw so many possibilities there that he saw nothing. It was a blinding darkness. He saw everything and nothing. Where could he turn now. Absurdly the old man singing came back to him. And he found himself trying to hum the tune. But he only made himself more conscious of how ridiculous he was.

Savagely he turned on Marty. "And what have you to say for yourself. Did you enjoy kissing her? Did ye have a great time- the two of ye?"

"I felt nothing." Marty answered tonelessly from the bed. ●



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ECEMBER

May 1958

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DECEMBER

A Magazine of the Arts and the Opinions
Volume One, Number Two May 1958

Richard Schechner, Deborah Trissel, James Trissel and
Louis Vaczek, Editors

Raeburn Miller, Poetry Editor

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WHEN daisies pied and violets blue
And lady-smocks all silver-white
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
"Cuckoo!
Cuckoo, Cuckoo!" O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

THE first edition of 600 copies of the first issue of DECEMBER sold out. A second edition of 200 copies also sold out. We know that such pleasant news was the result of good-will and curiosity, as well as disinterested interest. We are of course grateful. But we hope further that from now on we will earn our circulation.

Since a uniformly oriented group controls our major communication systems, we feel that our readers will enjoy--and perhaps think about--the work of people who recognize the potency of the individual. Manuscripts have already begun to arrive unsolicited from both coasts and several points in between; our selection will thereby be enlarged. If present plans for marketing DECEMBER are fulfilled, our next issue will be sold through a national distributor, as well as through subscriptions.

Our editorial purpose is in the magazine and not in what we may say about it. We hope to represent the lively and pungent view that so many of us feel has been missing from American art and American ideas. This view is not necessarily optimistic about nor kind toward contemporary attitudes--but when was the best in art and ideas ever an unequivocal supporter of the status quo?

The Editors

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LETTER FROM A GROWN-UP (For Patty)

Martha Grimes

"Here, then, is a great mystery... nothing in the universe can be the same if somewhere, we do not know where, a sheep that we never saw has--yes or no?--eaten a rose..."

The Little Prince

OUT of these cold and starry spaces
I write to you of roses, since
No grown-up fancy here embraces
Questions of so much consequence!

Does one rose on its star still show
Four thorns? And does its glass globe keep
The lamb away? Glass shatters so;
Four thorns aren't much to scare a sheep.

If lambs are safe, there's still the snow...
I stop, and watch the icy sky,
And wonder: Is it yes--or no?
Child, there are changes terrify.

Child, there are changes, when they come,
Like summers flown, like petals lost,
Make planets sway. --Stars turn upon
A broken bowl, a killing frost.

THE FIRST POEM FROM DANTE'S BANQUET

Translated by Harry Duncan

YE WHOSE intelligence moves the third
heaven, hear my heart's concern--
for other ears it seems too new.
The heaven that your valors turn,
kind creatures that you are, has stirred
in me the state I've now come to;
so, it is meet to speak to you
direct about the life I bear:
wherefore I pray you heed me well.
News of my heart I have to tell,
how the sad soul is weeping there
and how a spirit that gainsays
her comes to me on your star's rays.

My grieving heart's life used to be
a tender thought that would ascend
up to his feet who is our Lord,
see there a girl in glory, and
tell me of her so lovingly
that "I'll go too" my soul declared.
Another's come now, overpowered
the first, and domineers me so
that my heart's trembling can be seen.
He makes me look upon a queen
and says, "Who would salvation know,
let him behold this lady's eyes
if he can brave the pain of sighs."

That humble thought that spoke to me
then of an angel heaven-crowned
is vanquished by such opposition.
My soul weeps at this second wound
and wails, "Alas, how fast flies he
who gave me kindly consolation!"
and of my eyes makes lamentation:
"What a time when they looked on her!
Why didn't they listen when I cried

'Surely in her eyes there must bide
one who will prove my murderer'?
I might as well have spared my breath,
for still they stared; and I meet death. "

"You are not dead, only distraught,
soul of ours so sorrowful,"
a gentle sprite of love replies.
"The lovely lady who you feel
has changed your life so much: you ought
not fear her--this is cowardice.
See, she is merciful and wise,
meek in her greatness, courteous.
Then think of her as mistress now,
for undeluded you shall know
such high things so miraculous
that you will cry, 'Love, true my Lord,
behold thy handmaid; say thy word.' "

My song, I think there will be few
to understand well what you say,
for you are difficult, intense.
So if you happen on your way
to meet with any persons who
show that they do not grasp your sense,
I beg you gain back confidence,
my new delight, by telling them:
"But see how beautiful I am. "

QUIA AMORE LANGUEO

Robert Mezey

Fair love, let us go play:
Apples ben ripe in my gardayne.

IT WAS May morning, amidst the trees,
I met a lady of great beauty--
Only God sendeth such fine ladies
To walk abroad where I may see.
She stopped a space, and said gently,
"Gentleman, where am I to go?"
I took her hand, to come with me,
Quia amore langueo.

So did I come to a land again
Where I had been that very May morn,
And she could see where I had then
Picked flower and bursting fruit, and torn
The fig from thistle and the rose from thorn.
She kissed me sweet, she kissed me slow,
And I forgot where I was born,
Quia amore langueo.

So did the blind god wound my heart--
It will not heal, but paineth me much,
Making my side to bleed and smart.
This is all times the lot of such
As get Love's arrow, hot to touch.
Therefore my bleeding flesh must go
A dallying lady for to catch,
Quia amore langueo.

She playeth still in my arbor green
And eateth the balls of fruit, for some
Grow in abundance rich therein,
Plump grape and purple-dappled plum
That bend the bough that they hang from.
So weighty are they and wild they grow,
Full as my heart do they become,
Quia amore langueo.

Love that wand'reth in orchard sweet,
Come and be fed by my own hand.
Of my own lips mayest thou eat
That bleedeth on grass whereon we stand.
I cool thee with air by fern fanned.
Tarry not, Love, come, let us go:
I have more trees and other land,
 Quia amore langueo.

It is a country like to this,
Green as this is, and also as fair;
The tender wind doth meadow kiss;
Even rough serpents make love there.
I'll kiss thy mouth and tend thy hair,
Dress thee as dainty as thou might go,
For all thy desires shall I care,
 Quia amore langueo.

Then come, let us start on our journey--
See, for a charm I would kiss thee sweet.
Why dost thou stand thus away from me
And answer nothing that I entreat,
But smile to mock at my heart's heat?
Sayest thou, then, thou wilt not go?
Wilt thou reduce me at thy feet,
 Quia amore langueo?

She mindeth only her own desire,
She shunneth not to injure me,
She careth not for my blood's fire.
Wilt thou stay then, cruel lady?
I met a man once said this would be,
Prophesied to me such great woe;
I did not dream he spoke truly,
 Quia amore langueo.

Man, you are right: I plead too long,
Too ready to serve if she me call.
She mocketh my love with pretty song,
Or sitteth silent with smile small.
I say she loveth me not at all.
You told me this, man, long ago:

No longer hath she me in thrall,
Quia amore non langueo.

I was true love that was not false.
But it is changed now in all ways.
I eat plum, grape, and the sweet balls
Of strawberries where she once did graze,
Quince and mince and honey-dews.
All blossoms in my orchard blow
In the blue wind of these blue days,
Green in the wood wherein I go;
The flowers glisten, the rain falls,
My lady is not in any place;
I miss her not; nothing enthralls
But thighs of the forest, vine's maze;
Nothing but wild wood do I praise;
Apple and pear continue to grow,
And all prosper in the sun's rays,
Quia amore non langueo.

Robley Conant Wilson

APOLOGIA FOR THE NEXT OF KIN

EIGHT hours nameless, seven hours unwept,
These ashes cool past recollection. Now
The picket lines of blistered birch allow
No smothered footfall where the flames have swept,
And in this blackened grove at a pathway's end
The daybreak fog will mourn without a sound.
Noise enough when gray wings beat the ground
And burst with strength, but could not rise again.

Eight hours nameless, seven hours unwept,
These ashes cool. For what your tears are worth,
The vanity of loving is a sin
In men. These fell from love, and so begin
Learning upon this furnace floor of earth
A tongueless sleep the phoenix never slept.

GINSBERG: TO THE COURT

MAN, I don't dig you! Can't a guy be hipped
On life without the law and all that jazz
Pounding the doors down? Hah? My buddy Chaz,
(His cool soul riff in peace), he would've flipped
Seeing the way you cats come on in here.
Is this democracy or ain't it, Man?
I guess you quakers never put no ban
On Whitman. Hah? Hell, no, and he was queer.
So I'm a poet, y'know? I'm on this kick,
Like what's the world to me except a wall
To write my bitches on. That's it. You call
That criminal? My language make you sick?
Then what's the row about? What's all the strain?
Aren't four letters enough to spell out pain?

ON THE BLANK CARD*

Donald Justice

THE private reason for my deed
Is here set down with so much art
That even he who runs may read.
And reading it shall break his heart.

* The Thematic Apperception Test consists of a series of cards on which are depicted various scenes--some commonplace, some grotesque. The subject is asked to invent a story for each card, to tell who the characters are, what they are like, what they have been doing and how it will all turn out. The idea is that the subject will project himself into each scene and thus reveal his more or less secret wishes, frustrations, aggressions to the trained analyst. One of the cards frequently presented is perfectly blank.

AMERICAN MODERNS

Reviewed by Maxwell Geismar

AMERICAN MODERNS. From Rebellion to Conformity. By Maxwell Geismar. New York: Hill and Wang - 265 pp. Hard Cover Edition, \$3.95. Soft Cover, \$1.95.

A LITERARY critic who decides to publish a book is in a spot; which is probably why so many critics never publish anything. Most of the time the critic, sitting in judgment on his fellow mortals, must convey the impression that he is serene, lofty, untouchable. Of course there are the usual pressures of life and commerce, of friends and enemies, of treading one's way delicately over the corpses of one's competitors. Yet with a little training you get to know your way around, how to avoid embarrassing entanglements, when to speak and when to sit tight. Only now and then does the wise critic get well scorched.

But a book, your own book, that is, changes everything. It adds new dimensions to the judicial temperament; it offers the prospect of the critic being criticized. Now I don't mean that the distinguished literary quarterlies, such as the *Partisan*, *Hudson* or *Kenyon* reviews, are much of a problem. Since they concentrate on Yeats, Eliot, Pound, Kafka, James, they ignore any work of criticism or fiction that is vaguely contemporary--which is fine. One reason my present book was put out in soft covers was to avoid any reviews whatsoever.

But the publishers as usual have deceived and exploited the aspiring author. (Yes, indeed, the whole point is that suddenly one is no longer a critic but an author; one is overwhelmed by the dark labyrinth of hysteria, anxiety and paranoia which is sometimes called the "creative process.") These infamous publishers, by slapping boards around my inconspicuous little paper-back, have made a real book of it. They have forced this unwilling little volume upon the attention of chains and syndicates of book-reviewers. Well, we all know what the commercial press is like, and what it is capable of doing to such a book as "*American Moderns*."

In fact, I know just what most of these book reviewers will do. For this reason I am grateful to the enlightened editors of *December* magazine for giving me a chance--as Henry James said, there is never a second chance; that is

the delusion--to offset the views of those moral cads who now practice the honorable--well, just cads. In the old days many an author reviewed his own book anonymously; as I remember, Walt Whitman spent his life doing this. It is a mark of modern times that only in these pages--in this obscure little western publication which I hope and pray will never reach our eastern shores--that only here, can I present the true defense of what may well be called a literary crime. My poor little book, that is.

Am I joking? The first advance notice of "American Moderns" has just reached my desk. Designed as a service to book-sellers, this early review considers the possibility that I have done a disservice to American literature by paying attention to the illiteracy, the depravity, the "over-expanded obscenity" of the contemporary novel. A humanist and latitudinarian, as it says I am, I have become a dupe and a vessel for the "New Barbarism." Now frankly I am concerned about the distinction between obscenity and "over-expanded" obscenity, which sounds serious. And I hasten to say that at least two-thirds of the present volume has already been published in such respectable quarters as the New York Times, the Saturday Review, the University of Minnesota's Critique and, thank god, College English.

So that part of "American Moderns" must be decent, mustn't it? Of course, the essays which were published in The Nation are suspect from another angle. But all I can say is that The Nation was the only magazine which would publish them. So much for the freedom of the press! These essays, incidentally, are general pieces on the social, moral and esthetic atmosphere of the Forties and Fifties. They deal with the Epoch of Conformity, the Revival of "Normalcy," the American Conscience Today, the Age of Wouk, and the Higher and Higher Criticism. There is something in this section of the book which is bound to antagonize everybody except perhaps the present reviewer.

He, the Reviewer, as now distinct from both the Critic and the Author, in that process of publication which completes the fragmentizing of what used to be one's total personality--he, the reviewer, must add however, in all honesty, that the general essays in this volume circle around their subjects so violently that the Reader (a fourth split now discernible in the creative psyche) may get dizzy. This circling movement is characteristic of literary historians, as dis-

tinct from literary critics, who merely burrow. But let me get to the central thesis of "American Moderns," which is the Decline of the Classic Moderns, as viewed in the recent work of Hemingway, Faulkner, Dos Passos, Steinbeck or J. P. Marquand.

Now this thesis must be obvious to any intelligent student of the arts. If anybody doesn't know it by now, this book won't help him. If he does know it, why should he bother to buy the book? Why indeed does the present author attempt to trace and discover, to document and substantiate a thesis which became so obvious with the advent of the Nobel Prizes, the Pulitzer Prizes, and the National Book Awards? Well, perhaps he had nothing better to do at the time, and meanwhile he includes seven or eight essays on such new writers as Norman Mailer, J. D. Salinger, James Jones, William Styron and John Howard Griffin.

I have forgotten to mention the "middle-generation" writers such as Nelson Algren, John Hersey or James Gould Cozzens. The title of this last essay--"By Cozzens Possessed"--is perhaps the best thing in it. But I see that I am beginning to be enthusiastic about a volume which, after all, should be taken seriously and scientifically. Another one of this author's peculiarities is that he writes, on the whole, as if reading books was a pleasure, as if life really had some meaning to it, and as if the virtues of art included such things as vitality of feeling and clarity of vision. He should define his terms more rigorously than this--as we all know in the age of the New Critics--he should set up more accurate and precise frames of reference. The purpose, the only and total and pure purpose of criticism, is l'explication.

Well, that's about it. I realize I have paid rather too much attention to the volume which is being reviewed here, at the expense of more important topics such as the state of modern criticism. (Really, who cares about the modern novel?) I must apologize for certain irrelevant statements about the author's psyche, which has nothing to do, obviously, with the volume he has written. But I am glad to notice that I have not been trapped into mentioning the social atmosphere of the 1940's and '50's, which, dense, oppressive and calcified as it was, the present author holds in part responsible for the relatively thin literary production. Non-

sense: what have history and culture got to do with art?
Long live Joe McCarthy! Sputnik, arise!

(Maxwell Geismar is a literary critic of the now-defunct historical school. His previous books include "Writers in Crisis," "The Last of the Provincials," and "Rebels and Ancestors." He has long yearned for the chance to review one of his own books, believing no other critic today is competent to do this, and is indebted to the editors of December for reaching a similar conclusion.)



BOOKS—
some good,
some bad.

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JUBILEE ON THE BARRICADES

M. R. Bottaccini

WHEN ex-secretary Wilson stated that military security entails the loss of some "fringe" freedoms, no one in America became very excited. Most citizens dismissed this as another careless statement by a notoriously careless man. Some Americans, however, heard Mr. Wilson with pleasure and unconcealed approval. These Americans form a disorganized but powerful group: powerful as the result of the accomplishments of the individual members, disorganized as a result of the political immaturity of the same individuals. This group is not usually in politics nor is it powerful in business. The group has begun to infiltrate industrial management but only a few of the members have reached top levels. The truth is that the components of the group do not know that they form a group, do not realize that they have uniform social ideas and do not think of themselves as "influences".

This secret society (so secret that even the members do not know it exists) is composed of the engineers: the technical innovators, the mechanical revolutionists, the gyromatic Bolsheviks who every day find new ways to change our lives, every day design new gadgets which are better, faster, deeper, longer or simply more expensive than the superlative gadgets of the previous day. Exhausted with the brain wrecking work of creating the future the engineers refuse to accept change in any non-technical field. According to the Journal of Engineering Education 81% of all engineers claim to be Republican. (The remainder, one may suppose, are Southern Democrats.) Engineers have a crime rate lower than that of Amish farmers and a divorce rate only a little higher than that of Catholic priests. Engineers are socially stable, emotionally indifferent, politically immature---although it must be admitted that most of them play a good hand of bridge. Engineers are technically proficient and otherwise ignorant. Rare are the engineers who have a liberal education, even rarer are the engineers who appreciate non-technical intellectual pursuits.

The few engineers who read and think eventually gravitate to teaching, they pull the warm womb of alma mater over their heads and pursue the ephemera of Sanskrit de-

clensions or follow the intricacies of composing for the viola da gamba. From their austere, concrete lined, machine infested academic sanctuaries the teachers issue ukases about the liberalization of engineering training and the incorporation of the humanities in the engineering curriculum. No one listens to the teachers, least of all the students, those clear headed potential bridge players. The young men are in a hurry to graduate, in a hurry to get married, in a hurry to start building the great tomorrow... to start building toward that millenium where everyone will have a television set, everyone will play golf in the low nineties and no one will think at all. Engineering students consider courses in the humanities to be time stealers, destroyers of precious future hours. Who needs literature, philosophy, psychology or history? Certainly not the engineers, for Ford is in his heaven, thank Ford! (Pause to make the sign of the T.)

During a recent meeting of engineering teachers it was suggested that one of the freedoms to be given up in the interest of scientific speedup is the privilege of combining engineering with a liberal arts education. In the interest of gaining time, someone asked, should we not throw out the useless humanities and concentrate on the important things? Scarcely a murmur was heard in opposition and the discussion changed to a scientific evaluation of the effects of moving the Dodgers to Los Angeles. The teachers were not indifferent to liberalization, they simply realized that engineers do not care for a liberal education.

At the State University of Iowa less than fifty students out of one thousand are pursuing a "two degree" program, B. A. in the college of liberal arts and B. S. in the college of engineering. Work toward the B. A. consists of all the sciences studied for the B. S. with the addition of a foreign language and certain "core" courses. Studies involving opinion, evaluation, criticism or scholarship are not required and usually are not taken. A man who completes a two degree program can claim to have skimmed through some non-science subjects and to have spent five years doing it. His friend who pursues the standard engineering course can claim to have nearly failed twelve semester hours in the humanities.

Remove the humanizing influences from the curriculum and the engineer will be only a shade less educated. The nature of the engineering profession is such that restless imaginative people are not drawn to it for its own sake. Only a small cadre of academic engineers is interested in science and true research: the larger group in the profession deals with things and is uncomfortable with ideas. The engineers are sometimes inquisitive but rarely open-minded--they go by rules, formulas, handbooks and grammar books; they consider the dictionary the ultimate authority of the English language and are frightened by the suggestion that the dictionary is only a collection of not so current usage. Outside of his own professional area the engineer is uneducable, unhumanizable and incorrigibly ignorant.

Don't ask what the speed up in science will do to the engineer--nothing will change, the engineer shall be as he has always been, technically proficient, socially responsible, humanistically dead and emotionally indifferent. Let someone else man the barricades, engineers play a good hand of bridge.



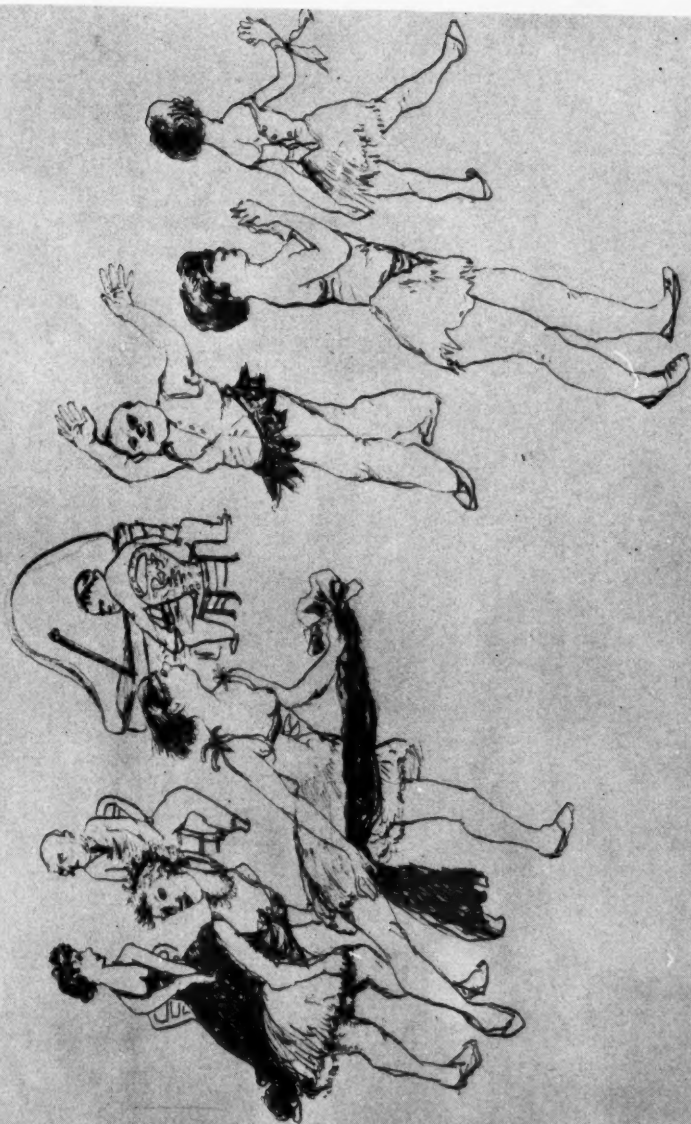
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ROCK MY SOUL

Ted Shine

FATHER Ben Black dressed himself in a white robe that glittered like glass, then removed his jewels from the box on the table. He placed a ring on each finger of both hands, a string of beads about his neck, and seven silver bracelets on his arms. He picked up a mirror and asked himself, "Will I succeed?"

"Of course you will," Miss Sue Willie Hollis assured him, and she placed a silk cape about his shoulders that touched the floor. "We've always been successful here." She removed a watch from her pocket and counted the seconds loudly. A minute passed. The clock above the bar, which was to serve as the pulpit, struck five times. A Big Ben alarmed, and from somewhere in the distance the sad coo-cooing of a bird echoed faintly. "That's the signal," Miss Sue Willie whispered, then she left the room and took her seat on the front row.

Father Ben Black moved to the door and gazed out into the room. He took a soiled handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his face, then glanced at the red and white streamers that hung from the idle ceiling fan.

"Bless Sweet Father!" a woman shouted.

"Amen!"

Father Black grinned and bowed politely, then took a seat at the old upright piano. He tilted his head, lifted his hands high, dropped them onto the keys, and sang a song so loudly that the windows in the tavern rattled and the tin roof began to vibrate. When he had completed his song he stood. "Children," he cleared his throat, "it's so hot in here I must catch a breath of air." In a split second he had disappeared into the back room.

A sister shouted, "Praise the Lord!"

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine!" Miss Sue Willie Hollis read from a Bible. "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep!"

"Amen!"

Oscar McGee, the proprietor of the tavern, stood behind the bar and poured himself a glass of beer. He could see Miss Sue Willie's lips moving, but did not hear what she was

saying. His mind was on the part that he had played in this meeting; how he invited each of the sisters to his tavern to hear the minister; how he had placed the tables against the back wall, and arranged the chairs before his bar; how he had purchased the white candles that burned on each side of the huge Bible; how he had consumed beer after beer that day (something he seldom did), and how embarrassed he had been when Miss Sue Willie and the minister arrived that morning and he had said all was in order. They had promised to give him a share of the collection and he had agreed. Now he felt empty inside, and his head was spinning. He was not a religious man and kept telling himself that he should not care, but he knew that the sisters before him cared, and he was ashamed. He belched, then poured himself another beer.

Miss Sue Willie had finished reading the passage from the Bible, and had begun beating on an old tambourine. "We're going to have fun tonight, sister!" she shouted. "Praise the Lord!"

"Praise the Lord!"

"Because He's good!"

"Yes, Jesus!"

"And we're lost sheep that must be found! Are you willing to be found, sisters?"

"Amen!"

Father Ben Black entered the room like a graceful bird, his hands stretched high above his head. "Come forth ye sinners," he beckoned a crooked finger toward the sisters, "and be ye saved!"

"I want my soul," Oscar McGee yelled, and he poured himself another beer. "I believe that damned preacher's got my soul."

Miss Sue Willie pretended to be shocked. "I knew that the Lord had us stop here purposely. It was just our luck to cast anchor in the right hell hole. A true sinner at last!"

"Yes, Lord!"

"Hallelujah!"

Father Black looked at McGee for a moment, then nodded to Miss Sue Willie. She eased over to the bar. "Have some respect," she whispered. "This is not a tavern tonight. It's a church. Now you put that damned beer down."

"I don't want money," McGee told her, and then went bottoms up. "I want my soul."

"Ugh!" Miss Sue Willie sighed.

Father Black moved to the piano and struck middle C. **BRRRINGING IN THE SHEEP!** The sisters joined him. **BRRRINGING IN THE SHEEP!** Miss Sue Willie beat her tambourine. The other women clapped. Slowly they began moving in their seats, then faster and faster until the seats could no longer hold them. Some stood, their hands raised high and their eyes focused on the minister, while others danced wildly in the aisle.

"Yes, Lord! Yes! Yes! Yes!"

The song went on and on. A sister screamed and a window shade raised itself with such a noise that every eye turned and all was silent. After a moment Father Black smiled and blushed, then said almost in a whisper, "Oh, God."

"Now you all had better give me my soul," McGee said.

"He means business."

As Father Black moved toward the bar, McGee grabbed his cape and whispered confidentially, "Man, I'm not playing. I want it and you'd better give it back to me."

The minister placed a delicate hand on McGee's shoulder. "Just be patient, child, and all that is lost shall be found and ye shall be most happy in this new world He has made for you."

"Amen!" Miss Sue Willie said.

"Amen!" the sisters agreed.

"Now you stop interfering with me, Oscar McGee," the minister whispered. "You'll get your cut." He moved to the Bible and opened it. "Come ye sinners and be ye saved!"

"In His name, Father!"

"Yes! Yes!"

"Oh, children, I tell you it's good to be here. It's so good to know that He's given us His blessings, and provided us with this meeting place this evening."

"True!"

"There are sinners outside who are willing to sit in here right now--drinking beer, and deprive us of hearing the word."

"Hallelujah!"

"Preach it, Father!"

"Because!"

"Yes, Father!"

"Because!"

"Amen!"

"Because. . ."

"Yes, Lord!"

"The devil is everywhere!"

"Yes, Lord!"

"Oh, children, I know the devil well. . ."

Oscar McGee belched and spit onto the floor. Father Black looked at him from the corner of his eyes, then faced his congregation. "The devil ain't nothing but an old bastard!" he whispered.

"Yes, Father!"

"Amen! Amen!"

"Come ye sinners and be ye saved!"

Miss Sue Willie had taken a seat behind the bar and was concealed from the sisters. "Oscar, honey, why don't you open me one of those beers," she whispered, "It's unbearably hot in here." McGee nodded, reached into the case and removed two six packs, then sat in the chair beside Miss Sue Willie. He lit a cigarette and blew the smoke toward the floor. "Why don't you all give it back, huh?" he asked meekly.

"What's that, honey?" Miss Sue Willie asked.

"You know what I'm talking about. I've been robbed."

Miss Sue Willie dipped the bar towel into the sink, then squeezed the water from it and waved it before her to absorb the smoke. "Oscar, you're drunk. Now open me another beer and be quiet." She took a long puff from his cigarette and blew the smoke into the towel.

"The Lord sure works in mysterious ways, doesn't He, children!" the minister stated.

"Amen!"

"Speak it, Father!"

"In His name!"

"Oh, children, children, children!" Father Black screamed, then burst forth into a song. In a second the tavern was ablaze with patting feet, tambourines, screams, and tears of happiness. The floor rocked slowly under the weight of the congregation. The tables in the back of the room began to slide, and the light in the victrola flickered twice then went out.

Miss Sue Willie Hollis, slumped in her seat, held the can of beer with long extended fingers and stared as if paralyzed at the Bible on the other end of the bar. She watched Ben Black take the ends of his cape and swing it back and

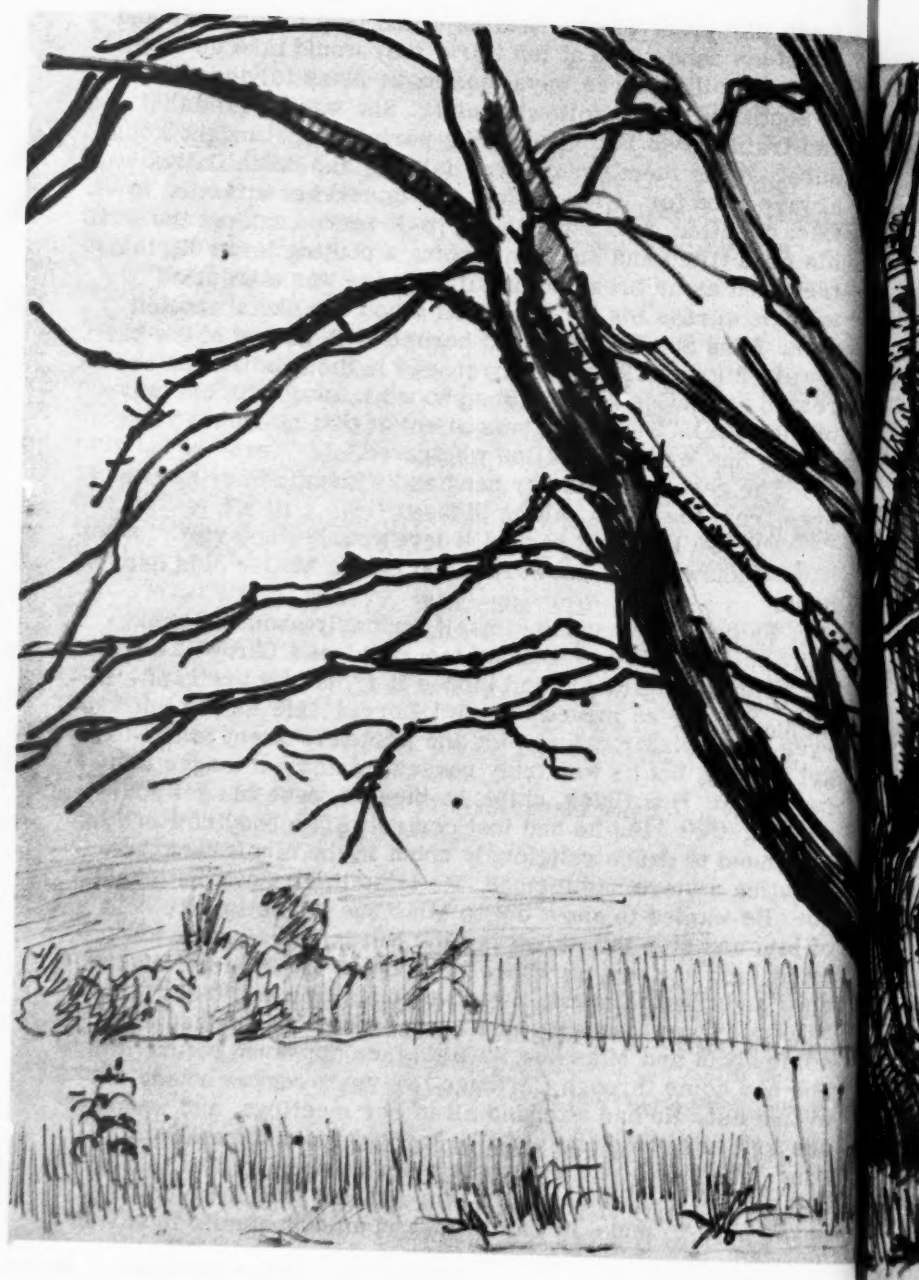
forth like great wings. Next he would leap into the air and begin his dance, and at ten thirty they would take up a collection, split it three ways, and make plans for the revival in South Dallas the following night. She was pleased that she had trained Ben Black well. His performance tonight would surely bring them twenty-five dollars, and South Dallas was always good for at least fifty. She turned her attention to Oscar McGee, who sat with his back reared against the wall, his head tilted and his chin forcing a pouting lower lip that trembled as he breathed noisily. There was a troubled wrinkle across his forehead that stood out like a swollen vein. Miss Sue Willie fanned herself with an end of the bar towel. A green fly buzzed overhead in the candle light and rested on McGee's nose. She shooed it away with one wave of the towel. The tavern was silent at that moment. Then, "Miss Sue Willie," McGee whispered.

She gestured with her hand and without removing her eyes from the Bible said, "Please."

"If you'll give it back, I'll love you."

"I know," she answered, and Oscar McGee held her hand.

Father Black shook himself furiously about his make-shift pulpit. "He has touched me, children! Lordy! Lordy!" He jumped into the air and landed in front of a group of sisters. "I've been moved! Lordy! Lordy!" He looked into the eyes of the sister before him and wanted to shout to her to get in step, but he was truly possessed and his tongue was paralyzed. Ben Black, child, he thought, best you get yourself together. But he had lost control of his body now and he continued to dance religiously about in the circle that the shouting sisters had formed. He tried to sit down but could not. He wanted to shout out to Miss Sue Willie to take hold of him and stop this thing, but the words remained in his mind, and she was no where to be seen. He became frightened and tried to speak, but all that his lips would say was, "Oooooowwwwwwweeeeeee!" He wondered how this had all come about and Miss Sue Willie's face appeared before him. She had come through Carthage two years ago as a lady evangelist. He had attended all of her meetings, and when she lost her voice one night he had led the congregation in song. She told him that he was a born preacher, and that he had been called. She offered him a salary, which he could never hope to make in Carthage, and an opportunity to travel





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with her and see the state. He accepted and she took him to Houston where she purchased the white satin for his robe, and taught him all that she knew about this profession. She had convinced him that he was the possessor of miraculous powers. He had cured that child with whooping cough in Waco, and there was that woman in Forney who had had arthritis, and a blind man once said that he saw. Was he, Benjamin Franklin Black, really who he was? He did not know. He only knew that he was now unable to control himself and it was a feeling that he did not like. The weight of his jewels, gifts from the contented who had been saved, seemed to glue his body to the floor, but some inner force compelled him to dance exotically in the candle lit room, and he moaned softly, "Oooooowwwwwweeeeee!"

Miss Sue Willie finished her beer without knowing she had carried the can to her mouth. Her eyes were focused on Ben Black and the sisters around him. The light from the candles bounced into their faces making their features disappear into dark grotesque shadows.

"This sure ain't fair," Oscar McGee stated, hunching Miss Sue Willie, "now is it?"

Without taking her eyes from Ben Black, she shook her head. "My dreams didn't lie in a silent town," she mumbled. "That's why I came here back in '32. I was to marry Ben Marvin McDanials." She arose and moved to the sisters. "This is the diamond ring he gave me--green with love and bitterness!" She extended a finger into the air and exposed a tiny stone whose base was so tight that it looked like a part of her flesh. "I came here in my wedding dress expecting to be married, and he had taken up with a West Dallas girl, and he told me to be on my merry way." She spoke loudly, but directed her conversation to no one in particular. A sister shouted, "Amen!"

"That evening I went to the Palm Cafe--a lily of youth."

"Yes, Jesus!"

"Drank two beers, and a pint of scotch. Men are interesting in the Palm Cafe!"

"Hallelujah!"

Father Black moaned, "Oooooowwwwwweeeeee!"

"I left here four years later--withered with age and experience!"

"Amen!"

"A ruined woman!"

"Praise Him! Praise Him!"

"Oooooowwwwwweeeeee!"

"I was walking along the highway when I heard a whisper in my left ear. 'Go to the nearest church and fetch a Bible and spread His word!' That's what I've tried to do, sisters!"

"Yes, Lord!"

"Jesus! Sweet Jesus!"

"I held my first sermon in the Palm Cafe and converted the proprietor, and established my Christian reputation."

"Hallelujah!"

"Praise the Lord!"

"And, damnitahell, I haven't saved a soul since!"

"Oooooowwwwwweeeeee!" moaned Father Black.

The words formed themselves in Miss Sue Willie's mouth and she heard what she was saying, but could not stop. "I guess I'm no good. I guess I'm that sinner. Praise the Lord! Somebody help me!" And she began fighting the air.

"Didn't I tell you to give me my soul!" Oscar McGee stated, staggering to Miss Sue Willie.

Miss Sue Willie screamed loudly and it was not a scream of salvation.

"Oooooowwwwwweeeeee!" moaned Father Ben Black, and he shook himself like a wildman. Tears stained his face, and his hands tore his satin cape from his body. He jumped about the circle of sisters, then danced in front of Miss Sue Willie. She had never seen him like this before, nor had she ever expressed herself so frankly. She became frightened. "Honey, what's the matter with you?" she asked. Father Black shook his head from side to side, and moaned, "Oooooowwwwwweeeeee!" Only his eyes expressed the torture that he was experiencing. He ripped his gown from his body so quickly that Miss Sue Willie thought his whole body was afire. He leaped into the air again, kicked his shoes aside and moaned. As he danced toward the bar it dawned on the sisters that he was practically nude. In his face there was great pain, for he was like Adam now, and two hundred eyes peered upon him. A sister stood up in her seat to get a better view. After she had seen, her eyes became very dry and clear, and she tossed her tambourine aside and said, "Damned!" then rushed from the tavern to spread the news.

Father Black carried his hands to his face and scratched himself until the blood spattered his chest and shoulders. He did not attempt to hide his nakedness, and whenever he tried to speak all that came was "Oooooowwwwwweeeee!"

Oscar McGee could see the terrible fear in the minister's eyes and he wanted to rush forth and hold the man and comfort him, but his own body was heavy and he was unable to move, so he just breathed deeply and watched. Miss Sue Willie believed that she was seeing a miracle, and it frightened her so she picked up a bottle of liquor from behind the bar and sent it crashing through a window. Sweat popped from the minister's body like tiny drops of rain on spring grass and he fell onto the floor and rolled over and over.

"I'm going to marry you and settle down and join church and be converted!" Miss Sue Willie shouted to Oscar McGee. He nodded, "yes," but did not remove his eyes from the minister.

"Oooooowwwwwweeeee!"

"Praise Sweet Father!"

"Oooooowwwwwweeeee!" Miss Sue Willie replied.

"Glory! Glory!"

"I can feel it! I can feel it!" McGee shouted and his hands reached forth and grabbed something in the air that no one saw. He held it close to his chest, then sat on the floor, and above Father Black's moaning said, "Thank you, man. Thank you. I knew you'd give it back." And then he fainted.

Miss Sue Willie screamed. Father Ben Black looked at her and said in a voice that was not his own, "I want my soul. I believe you've got my damned soul!"

"Amen!" a dancing sister shouted.

Miss Sue Willie was startled. "Lord," she whispered, then picked up a can of beer and took a long drink.

"Sinner!" a sister shouted, and she threw her tambourine at Miss Sue Willie. Father Black laughed hysterically, then cried, "I want my soul, you hear me!"

Miss Sue Willie shook herself slightly and moaned, "Oooooowwwwwweeeee!" A sister kicked her, and someone spit on the broach which she wore over her heart. Father Black laughed again, jumped into the aisle and ran from the tavern and blindly out into the night heading toward Carthage. The sisters in his congregation followed him.

The candle on the bar flickered for a second then went out, and the empty room was dark and cold. Miss Sue Willie

shivered as she turned on the light. She picked up the can of beer and poured it into McGee's face, then put a nickel into the victrola.

Oscar McGee looked at her for a moment. "I'll marry you now that you've given it back." Miss Sue Willie did not answer. "I've loved you for two hundred years," he whispered. Miss Sue Willie nodded, and shook herself to the music. The wind blew in through the broken window, bouncing against the walls of the tavern and tinkling the keys of the old upright piano in the corner. Oscar McGee smiled and embraced her. In the distance Father Ben Black's voice echoed through the night in a sad song, and Miss Sue Willie whispered, "Oooooowwwwwweeeeee."

One hundred four years old

H A N D S
J E W E L R Y



HARVEST IDYLL

W. Dennis Sullivan

SUN - struck ripples
turn the wheel,
turn the shaft,
turn the mill,
grind the harvest
into dust.

COASTAL LANDSCAPE

Jeff Marks

THE eye, from flat counties, extracts the rule,
and etches custom upon change. Disorder
drifts about the shadow of design: this fleshless border:
the Italian sun: trees like smoke
on the air--the black cypress, the blue oak--
teething seasons taking changes from
tides of bone-bright elements that fade
the tropic and still the wisteria tree's slow hum.
The lizard lodged behind the eye
colors with the idealist, not the fool.

The moontide climbs the coast on a following wind:
sleepers burrow deeper in the cities: cold
currents whisper through the streets and fold
the faces in sheets of voyages run to earth.
Freed from the city, the seaweed hands wear thin
to taste in bone the truth of origin
that death begins with birth.

Dry notions stalk the jasmine thickets
the annual beast lengthens to destroy;
beneath the paw, crickets
promise sharp seas to the belling buoy,
and autumn crawls crablike to the shore
in a rustle of winter wisdom. Once more--
your song curls its wide summer veins
and sighs away southward: silences spill
green shadows along the skimmed sea plains:
the lizard stirs once in his ashes, and is still.



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DRA

CLOWN WHITE. An excerpt from Act III.

Paul Gray

(Enter Nicolo carrying Tuzi Patz's shoes. He comes to the center of the stage. The clowns all look at Nicolo with a horrid fascination. He tries to match his painted smile with a smile of his own. They all watch and wait. He reaches the stage-edge.)

NICOLO. Good evening. I have the following announcement. Please scratch out the name of Tuzi Patz del Dolore as it appears on your playbill. He will not perform for you this evening. You see, Mr. Patz went dancing this evening - like the clown he is. I have a confession to make to you. All my life I have wanted to stand before an audience, as my father did before me, and make a tragic speech. It happened somewhere out there beyond the theatre. Mr. Patz was magnificent. I was so moved by his performance that I make this speech here. We left here just moments ago. He was a man who wanted to die. To dance or die, as he said. And he was a clown. Well, he walked across the street and lay down in the path of the downtown bus. It came to a halt and Mr. Patz pleaded with the driver "all your life you've wanted to push the gas pedal down through the floorboard" I heard him say "Well you have my permission" "No? No?" he pleaded "Don't be afraid of life or death" he said - but to no avail. You know that bridge over the river. Well, Mr. Patz calmly dived off. Car after car stopped - shoes were pulled off and men were diving after him "Leave me alone" he called "I'm looking for a golden ring" "Don't be afraid of life or death" he said, hoping they would understand but they pulled him out, and another man went diving for the ring. Finally, Mr. Patz and I climbed up to the top floor of that largest building that one out there. We buckled on our parachutes. This was an old trick of ours you see; we pulled it in every town. We would dress up in clown suits and leap off the highest building we could find. We were quite a sight to see - like men from outer space - As usual, a great crowd gathered. "Race you down" I said. "Don't be afraid of life or death" said Mr. Patz and he pushed me off. I heard gasps but as I pulled the familiar string, I felt that jerk and the world floated below. I looked up and saw Mr. Patz; he threw

something, it shot by me. It was his parachute. "Here I come, ready or not" I heard him say - and he pushed off. His feet - size 23 triple eee's flopped against the wind. He came right at me and screamed at me as he went by. I heard, and must report what he said for these were his last two words to this world "Cccchhhhhiiiiiiicccccckkkkeeeeeennnnnn SSSShhhhhhhiiiiiiiiiittttt!" he said, and then the street rose up and smashed him one. Now I am the kind of person that is only an attendant upon beauty. And personally, I do not believe in miracles. But there was one instant - and it is because of that instant only, that I am here - just that one moment before the street hit him - I heard a symphony orchestra! Please don't tell me that I am crazy but everywhere was music, a strange awful sound that only a sudden crash of some sort could put an end to. And in that beautiful moment of suspension, that man, Tuzi Patz, was as graceful as all the love he had in his heart for all of you put together. That man danced! And then -

(He falters)

I am afraid that I cannot go on.

(He forces composure upon himself)

I landed on my feet and made my way through the crowd. I am ashamed to admit that my face was all wet. Tuzi would have criticized me sharply had he known that I was crying. But my tears were soon dispelled. I heard laughter. I was at ease then, once more. That was the way he would have wanted it.

"It must have come from outer space" laughed one man "Look at it - that's not human" said another "Say, what kind of joke is this anyway?" said still another. I made my way through the crowd to the spot. And it was funny. Something lay there with a clown head all white and red and his feet were poking up into the air. "Look at those canal boats!" said one "What a gag" said another and then a woman's voice "Has anybody got a camera?" "You better take off his shoes" a voice said to me "his feet are swollen" I unlaced his shoes as a policeman pushed his way through the crowd "What's going on here" I heard him say. "Somebody threw a stuffed clown off the roof" said a man. I got his shoes off and pushed away through the crowd just in time. But I heard a little boy who had been staring at Tuzi turn to his mother and say "Gee looka the funny man" and he held on to his mother for dear life.

Here I am now with these two huge souvenirs. I have a second confession to make to you. I realize now that I am not the poet, nor have I the heart for tragic oratory. There is no thrill in it for me. You have witnessed my debut, and you have witnessed my finale. I know you will pardon me if I should retire.

(to LELIO)

These are for you.

(he gives shoes to Lelio, Tuzi's son.)

See I didn't stutter once. Tuzi would be so proud of me.

(breaking) "Gee look at the funny man" the child said.

(exit NICOLO)



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PURIST

Richard O'Connell

UTILITY

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But its being

Bored

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Say

by a nude blonde
Playing solitaire
By a flawless pool
On the sheer ledge of noon

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NOTES ON THE GREAT CHANGE

Robert Arthur

(Extract from 'Everything a Harvard Senior Needs to Know,' a quizam cram book prepared by the Off-Campus Tutoring Association, Cambridge, Mass., 2099.)

A BABY born in Denver with skin a delicate apple green. . .

A Harlem Negro who became a Messiah when he promised that his faithful followers would turn white, and they did. . . .

A Jewish playwright who died of heart failure when he returned from an extended stay in Europe and discovered that in his absence his entire family had become tall, blonde Nordics. . . .

A dozen Southern cities accidentally leveled by fire, and half a hundred courthouses burned to the ground so that the records they contained would be destroyed. . . .

Complete chaos in the Social Security division of the United States Government. . . .

These are the merest kaleidoscopic flashes picked out from the turmoil and confusion of the first forty years of The Great Change. The full story has been told in all its bewildering, fascinating detail in a hundred different volumes, most fully perhaps in Lewis' 'Years of The Great Change, 1961 - 2055'. *

Students preparing for quizams in Historical Science or Dynamic Sociology are referred to this volume. The general student seeking merely the degree of Ll. B. (Bachelor of Literacy) will find in this summary all pertinent information required.

Please take special note of the names of Professor Maxmillian Doremus, of San Francisco University, and Dr. Hugo Benedict, of Boston Technological Institute. It is only within the past decade that Historical Scientists have uncovered the roles these two men played in The Great Change. You may anticipate being asked to identify either or both.

Little is known of the early lives of either Professor Doremus or Dr. Benedict. Further research by Historical

* YEARS OF THE GREAT CHANGE, 1961-2055. Matthew Farrington Lewis. 1128 pp. \$35.00. Doubleday and Harper, New York, 2073 A.D.

Scientists, working under a grant from the wealthy Brotherhood of Organized Psychiatrists, may some day reveal to us what early influences operated on both Doremus and Benedict to bring about the fantastic results we now lump under the omnibus title of The Great Change. For quizam purposes, it is enough to know that the first significant discovery so far made is a scholarly but dull monograph, privately printed by Dr. Hugo Benedict, which appeared in 1959.

Entitled Social Peace Through Racial Homogeneity (note title) it attracted no general attention at the time. We may infer, however, that Professor Doremus read it and took violent exception to it, though if he issued any counter volume it has not been located.

Students asked to outline Dr. Benedict's thesis may safely summarize by saying that it was his contention social stability could only be achieved in a society made up entirely of individuals of a single race and cultural background, with no admixture of other ethnic or culture groups.

There is no record of any meeting between Benedict and Doremus prior to their encounter at the Scientific Congress which convened in Chicago in 1960. (Note date.)

There is abundant evidence that they did meet at this time, however. The details of the encounter are lacking, but mention is made of an actual physical assault upon Benedict, a stout man of explosive temperament, by Doremus, who though by no means young, was tall, wiry and athletic.

The violent hostility patterns set up in the two men by this incident may certainly be credited with launching them upon the fantastic endeavors which brought about The Great Change. (Students are referred to Section VIII for a discussion of the exaggerated hostility sometimes arising between scientists holding opposing theories of scientific truth.)

We may now summarize what Historical Science has established regarding the actions of Doremus and Benedict following their clash in Chicago in 1960.

In the spring of 1961, Professor Benedict resigned from the staff of the Boston Technological Institute, where he headed the department of physiological chemistry. Thereafter he secluded himself in his home, where he maintained a small private laboratory. From this he emerged at irregular intervals, always to make mysterious trips whose purpose he revealed to no one.

The first of these trips were throughout New England. Thereafter, in the next ten years, he visited every state, every county, in literal truth every town east of the Mississippi River. Then, no doubt exhausted from his labors, he died. Possibly in premonition of his approaching death he destroyed all his papers and records--whether in belated doubt as to the wisdom of his acts we can not tell.

We know, though, that in those ten years Dr. Benedict must have concentrated in his laboratory enormous quantities of the substance his few surviving notes do not identify beyond calling it Diet Factor X. But it is clear that Diet Factor X must have been the triumphal vindication of the Benedict Diet-Race Theory, which in his own day was largely disregarded by other scientists.

(Pre-medical students seeking their B. S. --Basic Sertificate of Literacy--may be asked to summarize the Benedict Diet-Race Theory. It will be enough to say that Dr. Benedict held that the division of mankind into various races with differing skin coloration and other physical differentiation was due to unidentified elements of diet operating over extended periods of time. He theorized, early in 1950, that the elements could be isolated and concentrated, and could be used to produce striking changes in skin and hair pigmentation, bony structure and the like.)

In Diet Factor X, Benedict wrote in his only surviving diary, "I have isolated and concentrated the chemical factors responsible for racial differentiation, and now by a proper choice of them can accomplish in a year what Nature unaided might require ten thousand years or more to do." We should find it difficult to credit this claim--except that half of The Great Change stands as a living proof of Benedict's accomplishment.

The purpose of Benedict's mysterious trips is now clear. In the course of them he was engaged in putting metal containers of Diet Factor X into every river, stream, reservoir or other accessible source of drinking water in the eastern United States.

Some of the containers have recently been recovered--empty, of course. But from their construction it is easy to see that the contents seeped out slowly, so that one canister would affect a large body of water for many years. It is accordingly deducible that Diet Factor X was effective in highly dilute solutions.

The result of Dr. Benedict's activities was to expose almost every inhabitant of the eastern half of the United States to Diet Factor X over a long period of time. And when we bear in mind its efficacy it is easy to understand now the physiological changes which, when they first manifested themselves, caused such consternation in some quarters, such delight in others.

The effect of Diet Factor X is by now so well-known that there is no need to detail it at length. Producing as it did a subtle alteration in the body chemistry of those exposed to it, it in ten years markedly changed the appearance of a majority of the inhabitants of the United States east of the Mississippi. It increased their height, caused their faces to become aquiline, with firm chins and wide-spaced eyes, altered their hair coloration to various shades of blond, their eyes to blue, and made their skins uniformly fair and white.

In short, it made them all into tall, blond, blue-eyed Nordics.

For a full discussion of the social adjustments that necessarily followed the metamorphosis, specialized students are referred to Part II of 'Years of the Great Change.' However, for the general student, a brief resume is not out of order. (An extended reply is neither required nor expected to any question you may encounter in a quizam leading merely to a Bachelor of Literacy degree.)

Because Dr. Benedict began his activities in New England, the first effects of Diet Factor X were noted there. However, as a large proportion of the population in that area was already of Nordic stock, the alteration in the appearance of the population as a whole was less marked than elsewhere.

In the city of New York, whose extensive reservoir system attracted Dr. Benedict's attention at an early date, the effects were swift and dramatic. Here two major effects were noted simultaneously, and received the first intensive (though fruitless) medical study.

The first of the two was the disappearance of the so-called Semitic face from an area where the Jewish population was almost a quarter of the whole. New York's millions of Jews, together with its hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of Slavic, South European and Latin American stock,

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became as tall, as blond and as clean-cut of feature as the purest sons of Scandinavia.

Even more dramatic, however, though it took longer, was the transformation of the teeming Negro thousands of Harlem into Nordics. The change was accompanied by prolonged and exaggerated religious revivals and worship of self-proclaimed Messiahs who took credit for the 'miracle' that was occurring. (See Chapter XXII of 'Years of the Great Change' for a discussion of this aspect.)

The change was slower in coming to the South because Benedict did not reach that region as soon. Inevitably, however, the Negro population of most of the Southern states began to turn inexorably white, to the outrage of the white population itself. Many Negroes, of course, migrated immediately to New York City when the first tidings of the transformation there reached them, causing municipal problems of the most serious character.

Many sincere citizens professed to believe the whole change a vast plot, though there was dispute as to who was behind it. Some said the Communists, some said the Negroes themselves, some blamed the widespread use of atomic power. Many lynchings and other acts of violence occurred, but the Change, of course, was not to be stopped.

At the end of ten years or so there was not a Negro left in the eastern section of the United States. Some, scorning the possibility of Changing, migrated to Mexico, Europe or South America. Others, in regions Benedict did not reach, took pains to move to areas where the Change was operative.

A development that Dr. Benedict doubtless failed to anticipate was the widespread burning of courthouses and other repositories of legal records. Many of the Changelings, as they were inevitably dubbed, realizing that only through birth certificates could their former race or color be proved, banded together to destroy these records. Thereafter they assumed new names and created for themselves fictitious backgrounds. Thousands, possibly millions of new Smiths, Browns, Joneses, Thomases, Whites and other names of Anglo-Saxon derivation blossomed in the telephone and street directories. As a consequence, the operations of the Social Security division were seriously disrupted for almost a generation.

In time of course the social system adjusted to the Change. And however one may view Dr. Benedict's tamper-

ing with the destinies of his fellow citizens, it can not be denied that he successfully proved the thesis advanced in his pamphlet, Social Peace Through Racial Homogeneity.

For in the entire eastern United States the steadily increasing internal friction caused by a mounting tide of anti-Semitism, Negrophobia and other such manifestations of racial discord vanished. Social harmony reigned. It was manifestly impossible for any minority racial groups to exist, or racial prejudice to develop in a society in which everyone was blonde and Nordic.

Benedict had achieved what we may call the quintessence of racial homogeneity.

But before discussing the further results of this accomplishment, it is now time to consider the other half of the story of The Great Change.

Whether Dr. Benedict and Professor Doremus, after their quarrel, agreed to divide the country up into two parts to serve as proving grounds for their respective theories, or whether Doremus initiated his own activities after perceiving the first results of Benedict's work, we have no way of telling.

However, shortly after the Change was first noticed in the East, Doremus abandoned his professorial duties at San Francisco University and retired to his home laboratory.

Doremus, as head of the Department of Genetics at the university, had been interested for many years in the possibility of controlling the evolution of animal species. His experiments in this direction were plainly well advanced---further advanced by far than any of his colleagues guessed.

In his workshop Doremus began the preparation of certain radioactive isotopes of whose nature we are still not sure. Historical Scientists have been unable to recreate them. However, we do know that when a sufficient quantity had been produced, Professor Doremus engaged pilots and with their aid dusted the salts over every city, town, village and hamlet west of the Mississippi River. It is recorded that he told the pilots he was testing a new insecticide for the government.

The major property of the radioactive isotopes seems to have been their effect on the genes of those exposed to them. Their result was thus to be seen in the offspring born nine months and more later in many sections of the West.

The first such child of whom we have record is Robin Smith, born in 1963 at Denver Municipal Hospital, with skin a delicate apple green and hair a clear chrome yellow. Almost before the national curiosity about him had been aroused, a dozen, then a score, then hundreds more such births occurred.

Within a period of two years, scarcely a child was being born in the western half of the United States which was normal by the accepted standards. There were babies with sky blue skin and orange hair, others with yellow eyes, ochre skin and blue hair, still others with skin colored beige, copper, magenta, yellow, or any one of a hundred other hues.

Fortunately, few births of freaks or monstrosities occurred. Nevertheless widespread consternation, not to say horror, was the nation's first reaction. The appearance of these strangely hued and tinted babies, together with the effects of the Change now being observed east of the Mississippi, threw the whole medical and scientific profession into an uproar that lasted for decades.

The belief that some strange epidemic was raging was responsible for the Mississippi River Quarantine Act of 1966, which effectively isolated the two halves of the United States for nearly three decades. After its repeal in 1996 the habit of non-intercourse had become so strong that in effect the United States was no longer a nation, but rather an alliance of two dissimilar halves.

For a study of the agitated years following the birth of the first Doremite (the name was coined by Dr. John Wellman Smith, who first uncovered the evidence of Doremus' share in the Change) the specialized student is again referred to 'Years of the Great Change,' esp. Chapters XXI-XXII. It is enough to say here that in time the public got over its initial shock. At a still later date, when it was discovered that the new Doremites were in every other way normal, if not indeed superior in health and intelligence to their parents, couples ceased to agitate themselves over the unusual appearance of their offspring. It became, indeed, a mild fad to hold family sweepstakes on the probable skin color of unborn infants.

The change proved to be genetically transmissible; children of Doremites were also Doremites. Thus in two generations, or shortly after the beginning of the 21st century, almost every individual under forty and living west of

the Mississippi was a Doremite. Among these millions were to be found hair, skin and eyes in every color, hue or tint known to nature.

Few of these individuals, contemporary records indicate, were repugnant or distasteful to the observer.

Indeed, with the necessary abandonment of preconceived notions of beauty, new standards of attractiveness arose. And whether judged under the old or the new standards, the Doremites were, at their best, breathtaking in sheer animal handsomeness.

The social changes brought about by the development of a society in which few individuals shared similar skin coloration were marked.

There could no longer be any minority groups. In effect, every individual belonged to a minority group. Neither could there be any majority groups. There were never enough individuals of a similar coloration in any community to band together into a clique of any size.

The result was the development of a democracy just as complete in its way as the new democracy in the eastern United States, where everyone, thanks to Dr. Benedict, now resembled everyone else.

Personal character and ability became the sole determining factors in the position any individual occupied in the new society. Thus every individual was forced to exert himself to his fullest capabilities to win success and esteem.

The social arts flourished in consequence. Indeed, Doremite society developed a brilliance and richness unparalleled in modern times.

Because difference of skin coloration was looked upon as normal, difference of taste and viewpoint became likewise normal. One of the keenest pleasures of Doremite society was discussion and debate.

With new frontiers of human thinking thrown open by the breakdown of old prejudices and habits of thought, literature rose to golden heights. Philosophical writing of a depth and brilliance seldom achieved previously was the contribution of scores of great minds. Music in new forms and patterns vied for favor with compositions building upon the great masters of an earlier day.

Poetry, sculpture, painting--all enjoyed a renaissance that could find no counterpart, save perhaps in the Golden Age of Greece.

San Francisco was transformed into the cultural capital of the world. From it flowed a golden stream that enriched the life of every civilized human being. To it flocked tourists and travelers, students and teachers, to enjoy its museums, universities, galleries, concerts and night life.

For as sociability was a primary need in Doremite society, so social life became itself an art. The private parties and the public night life of San Francisco, and to a lesser degree Los Angeles and Seattle, Reno and Denver, became famous the world over.

The new San Francisco Conservatory of Music was known everywhere. But even more widely spread was the fame of the Rainbow Chorus of the Western Follies, composed of a hundred beautiful dancers, every one with differently colored skin.

Life among the Doremites was warm, gay, rich and colorful, with a minimum of interference in the life of any citizen. Social discord was non-existent.

Thus did Professor Doremus validate his opposition of many years before to Dr. Benedict's theories. He did not, however, live to see the society he brought into being. A short time after he had finished his work he died of radiation burns. Before his death he destroyed all his notes and papers. As he died during the period of greatest agitation following the birth of the first Doremites, he may well have believed himself unsuccessful.

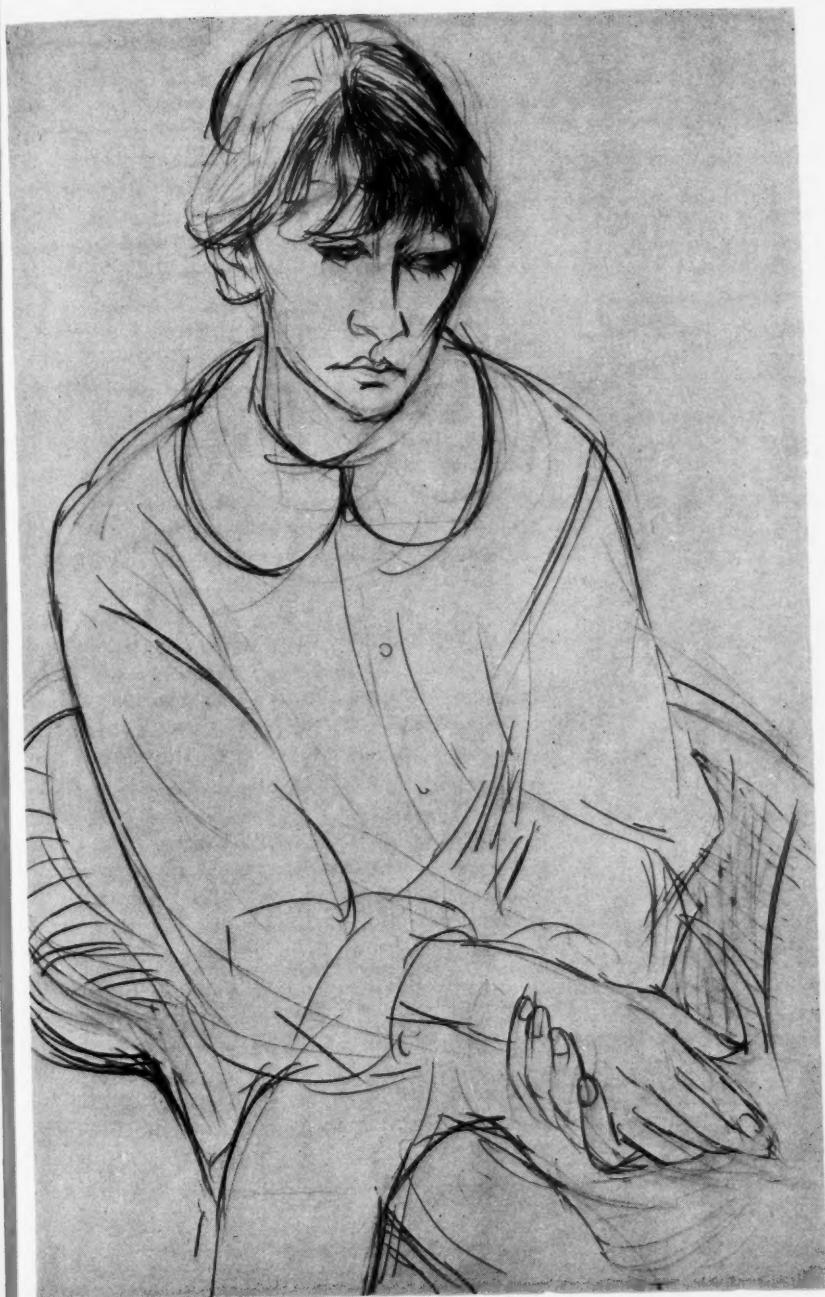
It is now an appropriate time to consider the further progress of The Great Change in the eastern United States.

Some years before the Doremite culture was fully established, The Change was completed east of the Mississippi. Thus that half of the country settled down sooner to a development of the new social order the Change brought about.

We have already noted that social peace followed the metamorphosis of all eastern Americans into tall, blond, blue-eyed Nordics. And the early years after the Change were fruitful in their progress. Education made great strides, and cooperation between responsible individuals, which is the cornerstone of democracy, was effective to a degree never previously known.

After two decades of progress, however, stagnation, at first imperceptible, but slow and insidious, took place. To European observers the art, literature and music of the eastern United States very gradually became stereotyped and re-

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petitive. The more this became noticeable to outside critics, the more fiercely did the native critics defend their countrymen's productions.

In spite, also, of the fact that scientific progress advanced with tremendous pace, and no peoples in history have ever been so showered with material abundance, philosophic writings on a morbid note came increasingly from the presses. The suicide rate moved steadily upward and admissions to mental asylums for depressive melancholia rose to shocking proportions.

Then came the religious revival which began just after the year 2000. Brother Isaiah (note name) an unknown revivalist who became suddenly an idol of the masses, exploded out of obscurity with his religion of ascetism and self-denial. Isaiahism, to give the movement its popular title, slowly grew, to eventually assume frenzy proportions.

Nor did it die down after running a course, as observers at first predicted. Seeming to fill some unconscious need, it continued to increase in favor. Eventually millions were fervent Isaiahists. And the 'religion' which Brother Isaiah preached became increasingly fervid and violent--an inevitable development if the interest of his followers was to be sustained.

From asceticism, Isaiahism developed into a violent Puritanism, and the first targets for the fervid exhorters who followed in Brother Isaiah's footsteps were the Doremities to the west.

There had long been an attitude of passive disapproval of the Doremities prevalent among the Changelings. This disapproval now became active. Pulpit and press both began to picture the Doremities as lascivious, licentious, immoral people who by their appearance and actions were "degrading the United States, the human race, and the very God Whose image they mocked." (The quotation is from a contemporary pamphlet. Advanced students are referred to Book III of 'Years of the Great Change' for a detailed study of this period.)

The Doremities themselves paid but little attention to the rantings and ravings of the early agitators. Accustomed as they were to personal freedom accompanied by individual responsibility, they themselves had produced many freakish and short-lived 'prophets' and their cults.

So even when Doremite vilification became almost public policy in the East, the many-colored Doremites did not take it seriously. Then came the movement to split the Union into two nations, one to be called, as before, the United States, the other The States of the West.

The Congress of the United States, the eastern members representing a large numerical majority, voted for the split. The members from the western states, Doremites all, observing the temper of their compatriots, agreed. Thus in 2035 (note date) the United States became two separate nations, much after the manner of India and Pakistan in the previous century. (Non-specialized students may make this comparison safely if the question arises in a quizam. Details will not be required. Much the same personal hardship and suffering was encountered by individuals, the same dislocation of personal and business lives took place. After some five years, however, the two nations had settled down again to go their respective courses, with hardly a citizen of one to be found within the borders of the other.)

For some years, the cult of Isaiahism now dwindled. Side by side the two nations existed with relations between them confined to the formalities of business and trade. When the United States passed the Exclusion Acts of 2046, The States of the West hardly protested; they seemed to make no practical difference.

Then Isaiahism began to rise again, sparked by a new prophet who called himself the spiritual son of the original Brother Isaiah. A fervor that may be likened only to the fervor which sparked the Crusades of the Middle Ages, or perhaps to the religious fanaticism which enabled the Moslem nations to almost overrun Europe, coursed through the millions of Changelings.

No formal war was declared, but the powerful Purity Party, a semi-military organization numbering millions, took matters into its own hands. In secret it organized a 'holy' invasion, and in 2055 (note date) millions of blond Changelings swarmed across the Mississippi upon the unprepared Doremites with the newest and most scientific weapons.

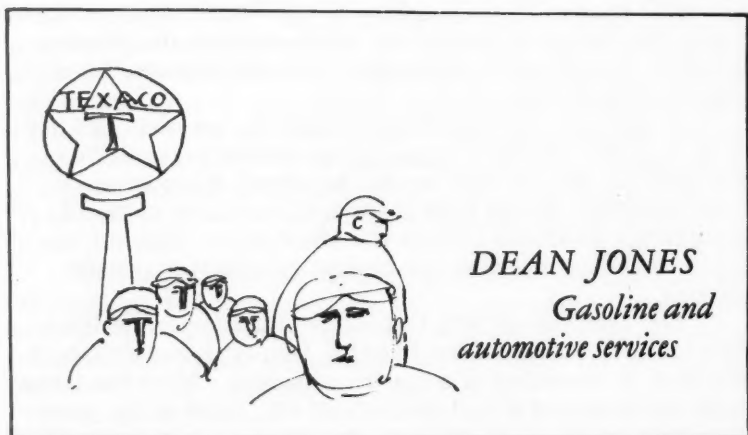
The Doremites, who had almost no army or military organization, struggled but briefly. Disorganized as the attack was, it prevailed in a matter of weeks. When the frenzy which had inspired it had worn itself off, most of the parti-

cipants in the attack were aghast at their actions and at a loss to account for the impulse which had animated them.

The attack, however, had two results: the two nations again became one, and the cult of Isaiahism died abruptly, for the very good reason that not enough Doremities remained alive to serve as a target for its violence.

(Candidates for degrees of Bachelor of Literacy, Master of Literacy and Doctor of Literacy will be expected to confine their answers to any questions on this general subject to purely factual details. Only students of Historical Science, Dynamic Sociology, Mass Psychiatrics and Philosophical Psychology may, by special permission, broaden the scope of their answers to include a discussion of the present day status of the descendants of the surviving Doremities as an minority group living on the fringes of Changeling society. However, interested students are referred to Hoskins' 'Doremities Are People Too,'* a recent discussion of the great progress which is being made in combating prejudice and discrimination against the Doremities.)

* DOREMITES ARE PEOPLE TOO. William Wadsworth Hoskins. 96 pp. \$5.00. Cambridge Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2099 A.D.



From:

ALONZO'S UNPLEASANT
POCKET BESTIARY

Thomas Williams

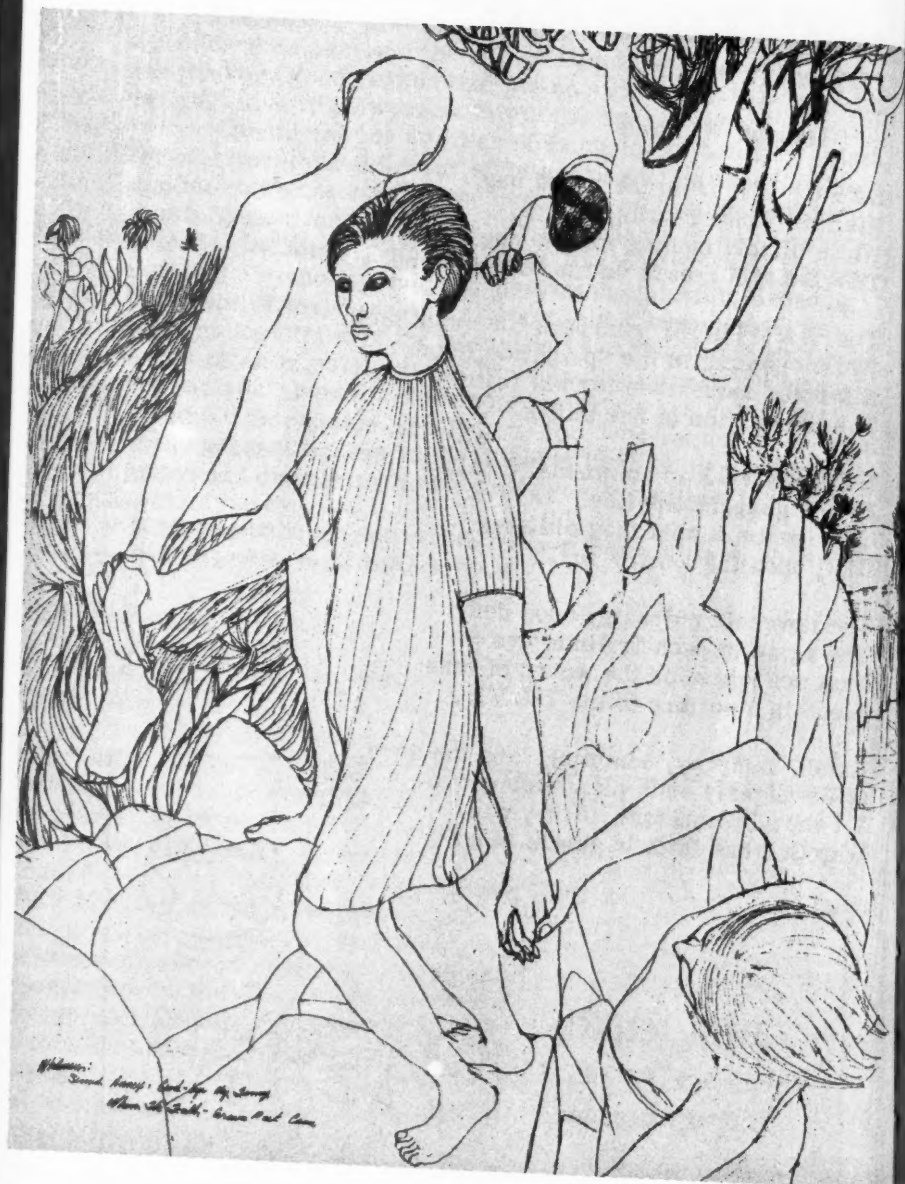
EJECTED from the tumid hug,
His idiot hunger calls, Attack.
While blindly hunting for the dug,
The LAMB treads on his brother's back.

The LAMPREY sharpens his quick teeth
While coupling in the springtide flood.
His mate bequeathes for his relief
The lubrication of her blood.

LEMMINGS in communal thrall,
By the generations flee.
They become what they did seek:
Glut, upon the hungry sea.

The dovecote's dreamy coos deny
The agate in each brilliant eye
That searches for the wound of love:
Blood is a soilure to the DOVE.

Lamb, lamprey, lemming, and the dove,
Quite eagerly such pleasures prove
To show by contrast, if they can,
Why God has faith in gentle MAN.



H. H. H.
Second Series - Good - Age 14 - 15
When the Bull - Green - Red - Blue

WHAT IS A SHORT STORY?

Sidney Landau

WHAT is a short story? I don't know, and I don't care.

How many times, in the fiction workshops springing up as maverick-members of our universities' English departments, has an earnest young man with carefully cultivated accent pronounced verdict on another student's work: "But it just isn't a short story." Then, likely as not, the claim will be disputed; authorities will be quoted, examples held aloft, and poor Henry James will be dragged in by his collar button. In all this it is assumed that if a story may indeed be called a 'short story,' it becomes invested with a mysterious but significant virtue it would not otherwise have. The pedants, young and old, have long been in the habit of confusing classification with substance, but only in modern times has the confusion spread to the short story.

Put very simply, what the earnest young man forgets--and the person who disputes him--is that the story, call it an oogulum if you wish, has already been written, and its value, or lack of it, will not be affected one whit by proclaiming it to be, or not to be, a short story. There it is, it is just so many words, and you can count them before and after the judgment if you don't believe me. Even so, I am convinced a great many earnest young men, 'knowing' it to be a short story, would somehow contrive to come up with a different total the second time around. At least they would count more tenderly.

Such is labelomania, the New Insanity. Though in origin far from new, only lately has it been recognized, largely through the efforts of sociologists, as profoundly scientific. The logic of labelomania works like this:

STEP 1. At first there is only chaos, people scratching under their arms and yawning, flushing toilets, standing in bus-lines, kneeling in church.

STEP 2. On the scene comes a team of sociologists. They have large, genial foreheads.

"Aha!" says one. "I note the diversity of human behavior."

"Let us classify it," says another.

At once a third draws a notebook from his pocket and writes:

"1. Scratching under arm and yawning

"2. Flushing toilet

"3. Standing in bus-line

"4. Kneeling in church."

STEP 3. The sociologists publish a book. They have classified human behavior. They know what is normal and what is not normal for nobody in particular.

STEP 4. The sociologists publish another book. This is a study of the abnormal, with suggested therapy on how to make them normal.

Thus have they progressed from observation, to classification, to ethic. The abnormal becomes unhealthy, something to be beneficently altered. But let us return, for a moment, to Step 1. There is a man, Joe Kleeg, who, at the age of 24, spends an average of thirty minutes a day sucking on his right thumb. This gives him, he believes, a deep and lasting satisfaction. On the basis of what we know about Joe Kleeg, his family, his friends, his interests, we may come to a conclusion as to whether or not thumbsucking does in fact contribute to Joe Kleeg's welfare. We may, of course, be wrong, if our facts are inaccurate or incomplete, but we at least have the basis for judgment. Our judgment will necessarily be based on the ethic of Joe Kleeg. The question will not be, "Is thumbsucking wrong?" but, "Does Joe Kleeg's thumbsucking in the main contribute to or detract from what Joe Kleeg wants most out of life?"

Now let us skip to Step 4. Joe Kleeg still sucks his thumb for thirty minutes every day, but the sociologists have now classified it; it is abnormal behavior. It is unhealthy and ought, for Joe Kleeg's own good, to be changed. Supposing that tomorrow most 24 year-old men unaccountably started sucking their right thumbs for half an hour a day. The sociologists would reclassify it. It is normal. It is healthy and ought not, for Joe Kleeg's own good, to be changed.

But Joe Kleeg is quite unaware of all this. The reasons that motivated him to suck his thumb still motivate him, and if they were inadequate before they are still inadequate, and if they were sufficient before they are still sufficient. Classification may be of some use in telling us how people do act; it is of not the slightest use in telling us how they ought to.

Classification, as history, may be useful in guiding us: to express an idea, one does after all need some form in which to express it. But to draw conclusions about the success or failure of a completed work by the degree of conformity of its method to an invented guide is labelomaniac dogma at its worst. Just as the sociologist assumes that the only way to be healthy is to be 'normal,' so does the literary labelomaniac assume that for a piece of fiction to be successful it must conform to the rules derived from it! It is Joe Kleeg who determines what is normal; it is the piece of fiction, the oogulum, that determines what a short story is or isn't. No doubt there are still scholars in fearful turmoil over whether Beethoven's Ninth Oogulum is really a symphony.

Perhaps you feel I have been unfair to the earnest young men. "Surely," some one will say irritably, "You must admit that something is meant by the words 'short story.'"

Well, what?

A short story, I presume, is short and a story. But how short and how a story? I don't know. Must it have a beginning, a middle, and an end? So do all beetles and some novels. Usually the short story differs from longer fiction in being shorter (I am not being facetious). Secondly, we are told, it confines its scope to one central problem or idea and to no more than three or four major characters. However, Dostoevsky's Notes from the Underground, which Charles Neider calls a 'novella,' but which is clearly an oogulum, is too long to be short, too short to be long, has only one major character and a whole host of ideas. What the hell is it?

Clothing for men



St. Clair Johnson

(Advertisement)

THE VERY AIR HE BREATHES

Robert S. Sward

SHE lies upon a tawny mat
of effluence, --and leopard spots.

And he ("he's hers
and she knows it!")

Can but barely be seen... crouched
and to the left of her.

One ear, an eyebrow, and a bit of cheek
are all that show of him.

The caption (again) suggests that it is fun
("fabulous fun") being female

At a time like this! And, indeed,
it looks like fun.

Her eyes are huge and subtly closed
as leopard spots; and her lips are spread.

She is, in fact, a deodored leopardess
about to take the male.

But again, the caption: You are the very air
he breathes (the male is hard upon her).

She appears to be undisturbed by this;
and with both shaved armpits bared, she arches

For him. One is inclined to think of her
as being altogether without fear; she smiles,

And takes the male. Neither deodorant,
nor effluence, could do more.

She smiles,
and she lies there, the very air
he breathed.





